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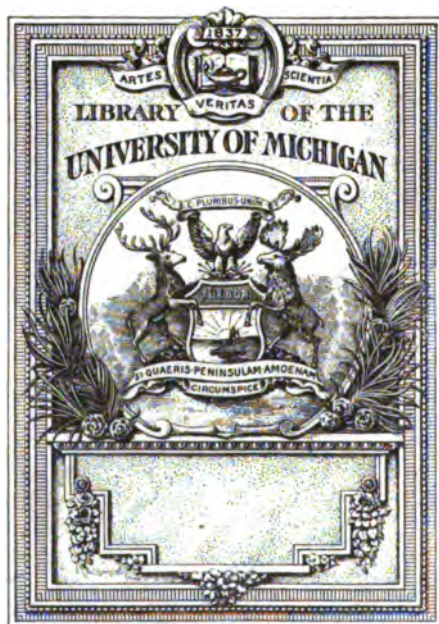
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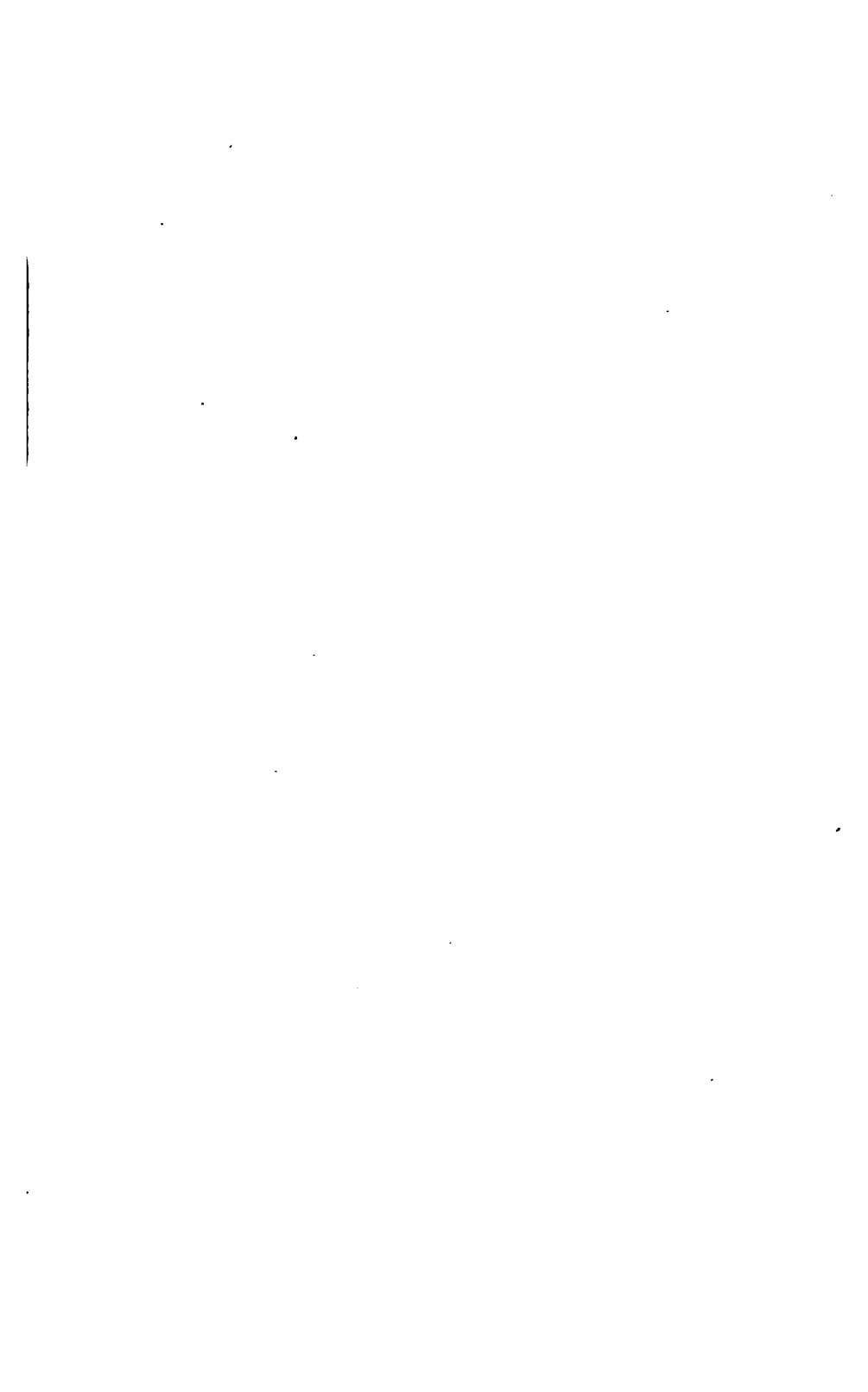
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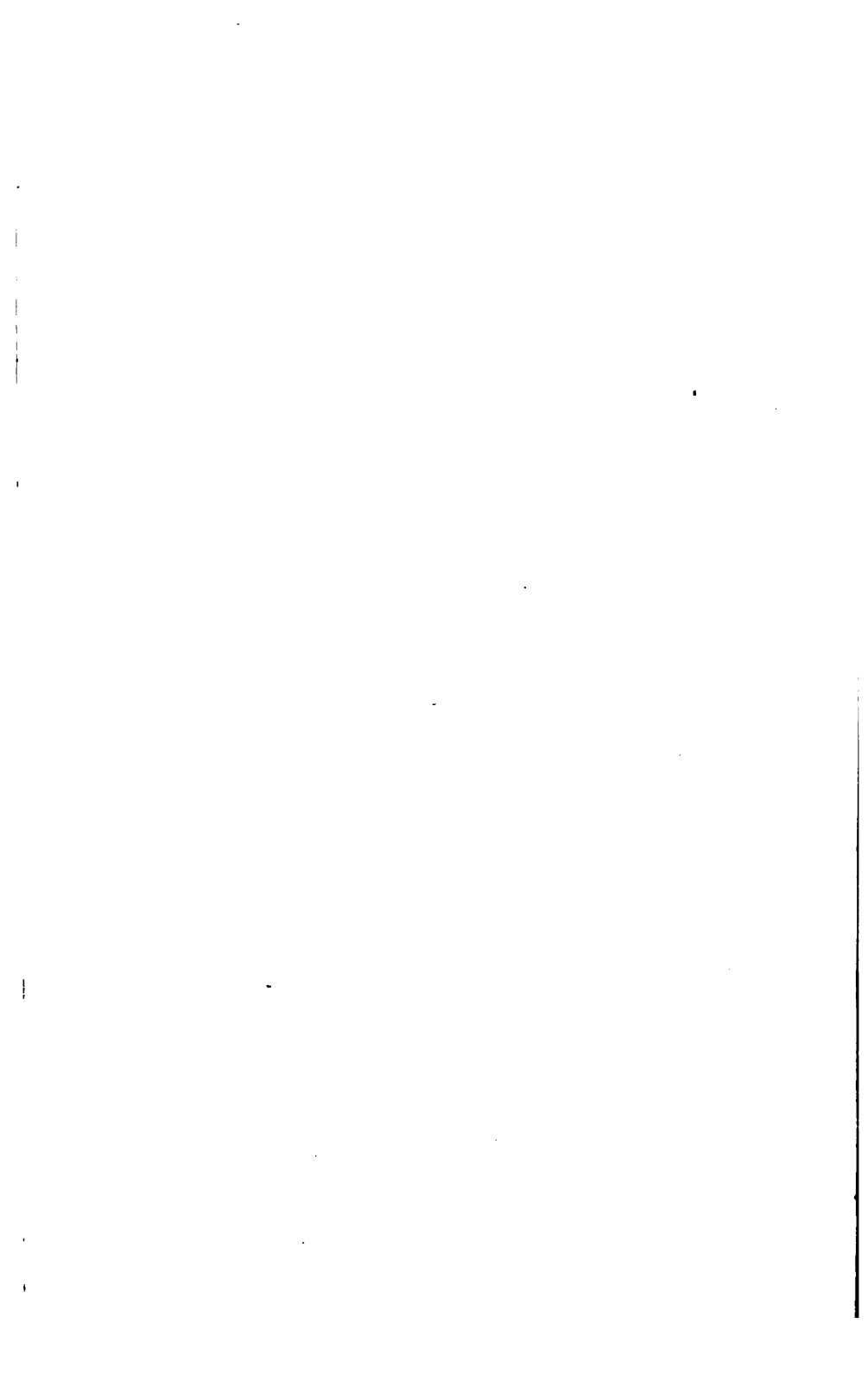


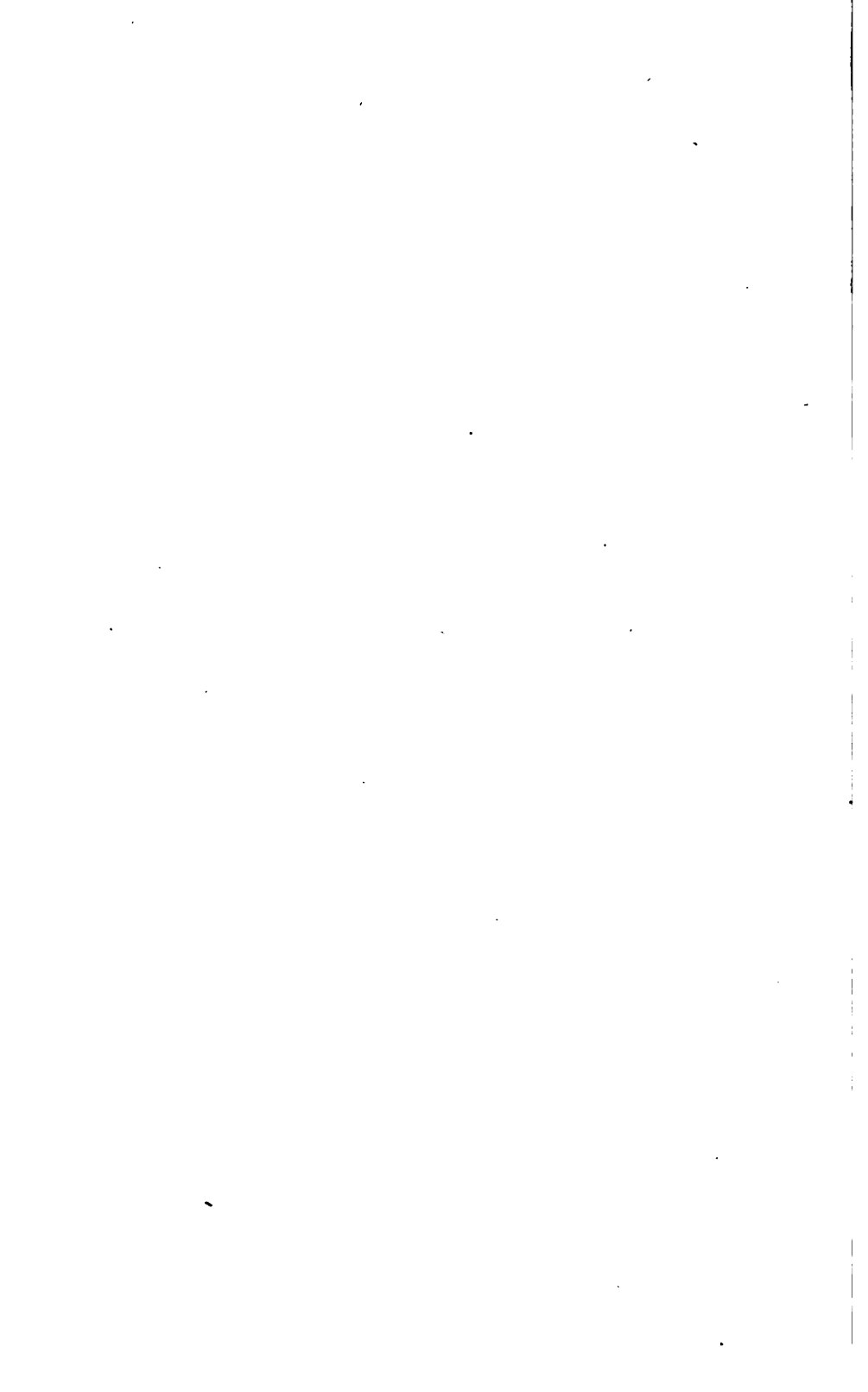
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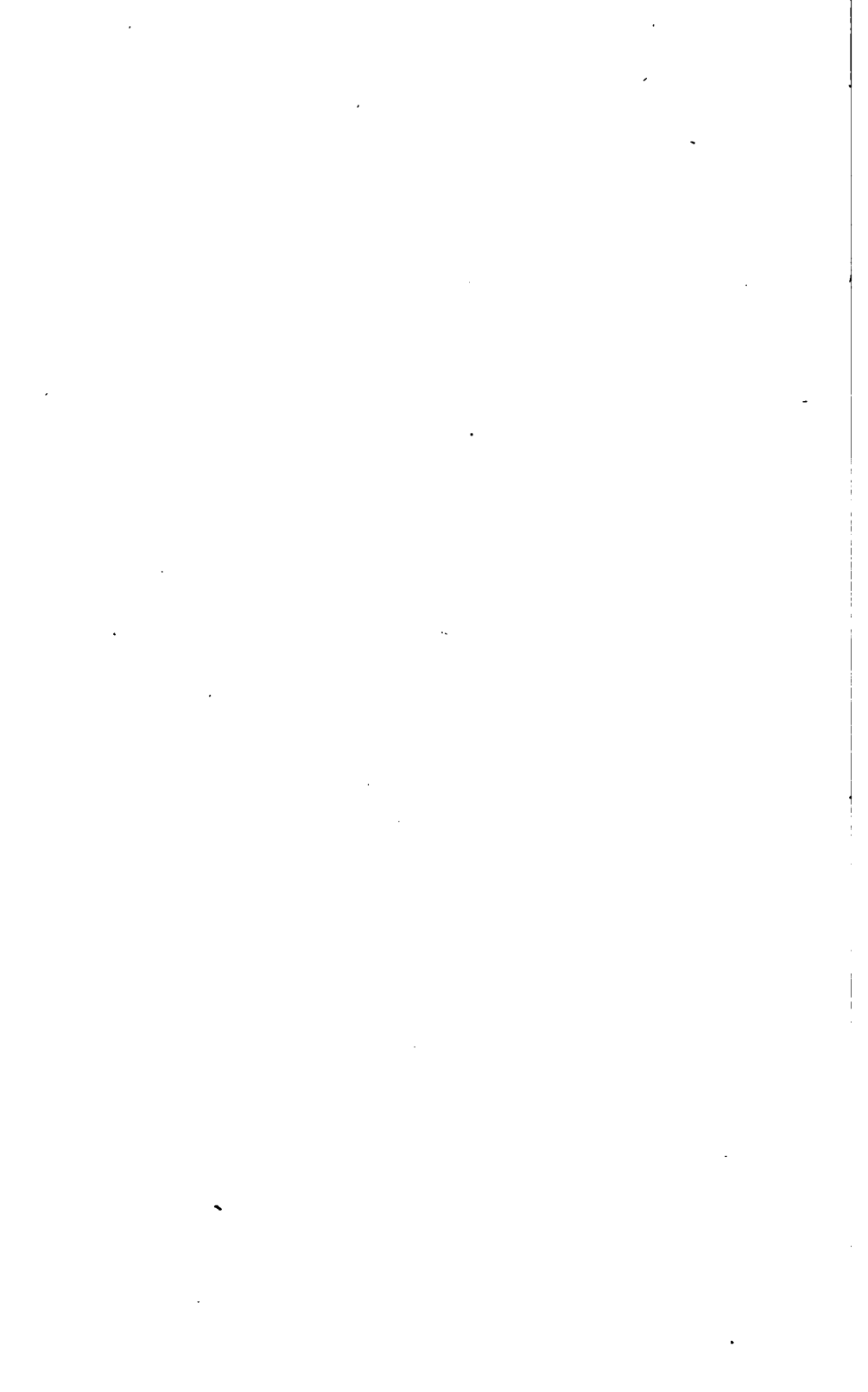
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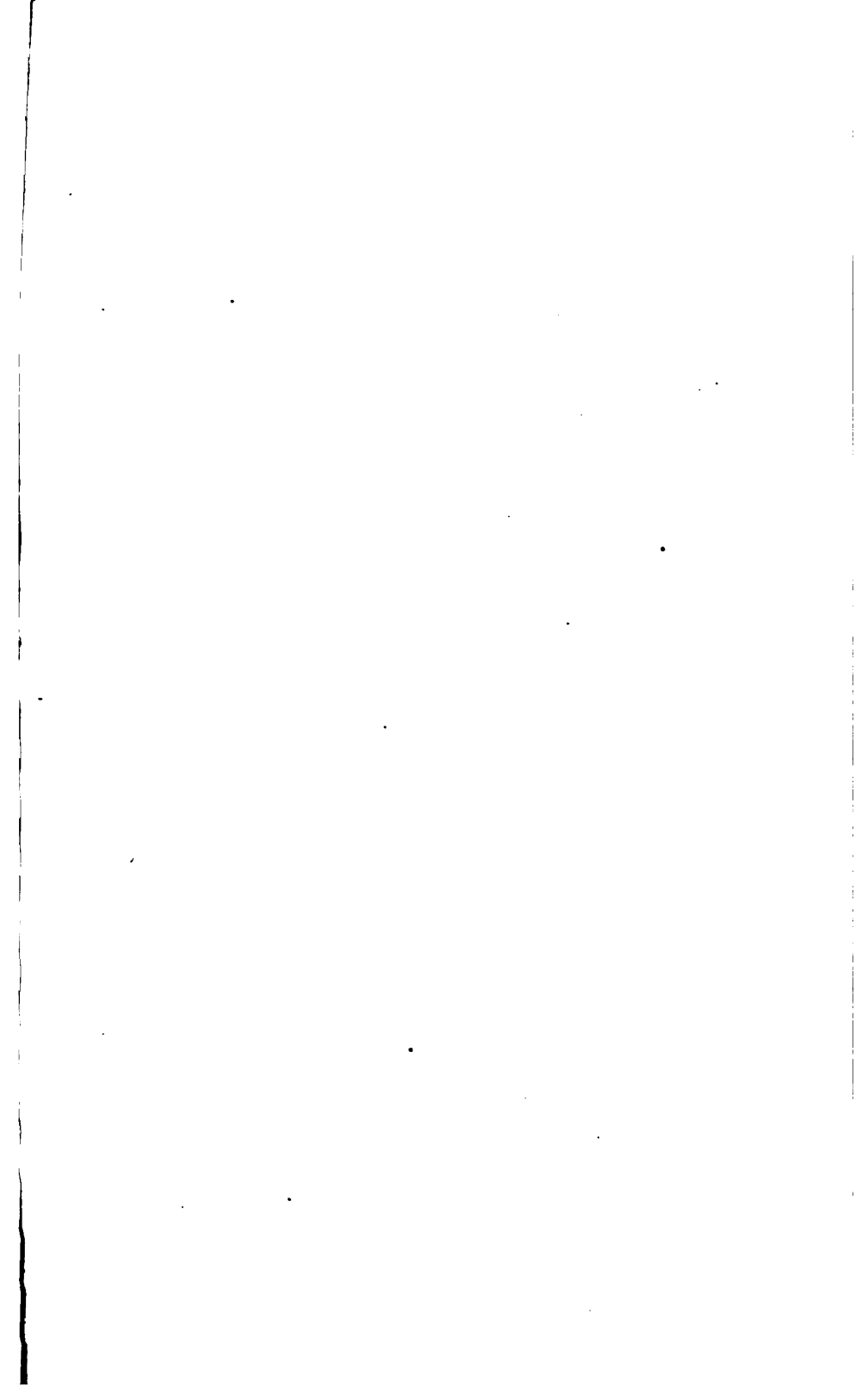


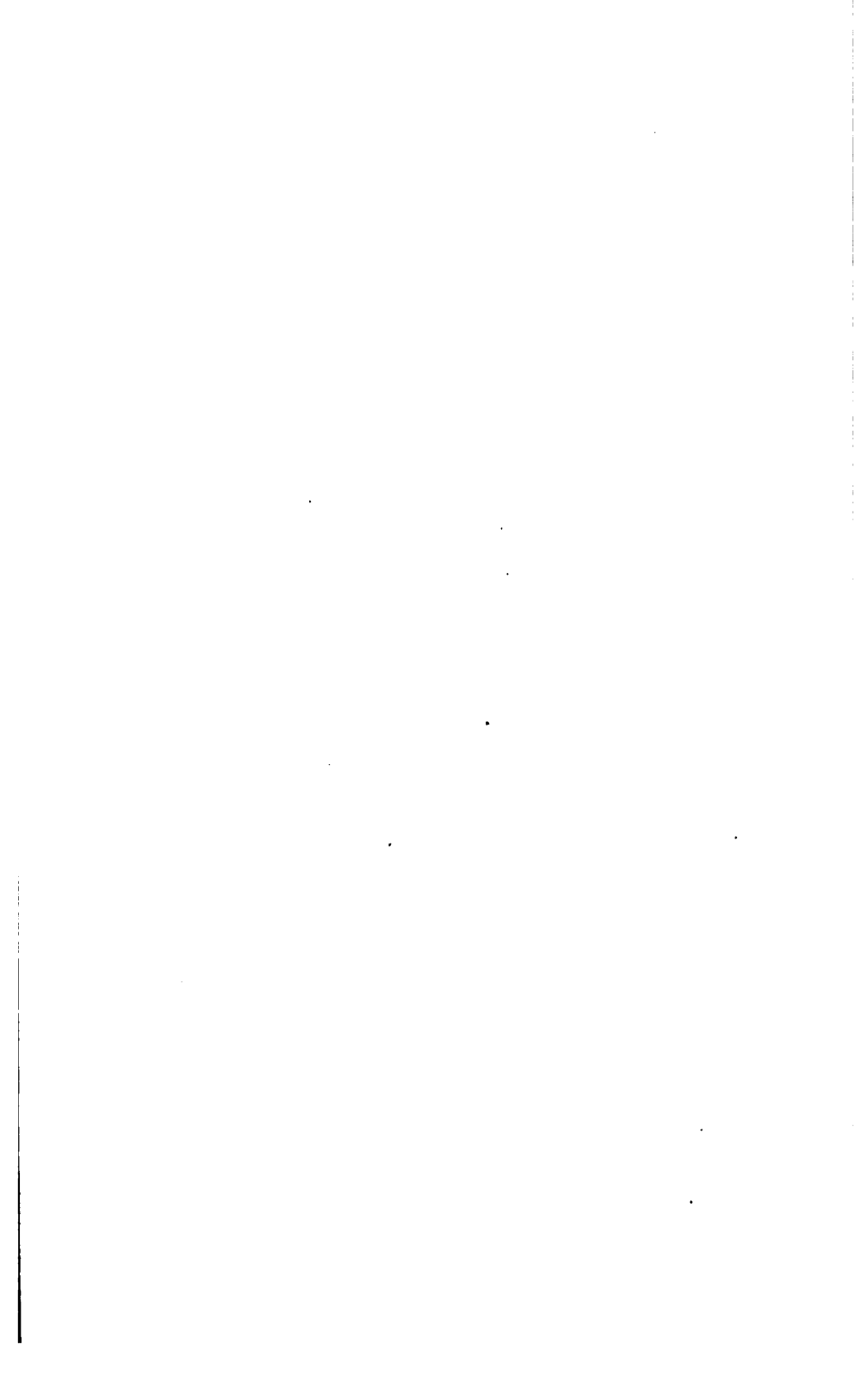


SEVEN FLATS!

Drawn by Adelaide Claxton.

See the Poem.





LONDON SOCIETY.

An Illustrated Magazine

OF

LIGHT AND AMUSING LITERATURE

FOR

THE HOURS OF RELAXATION.

VOLUME VI.

LONDON:

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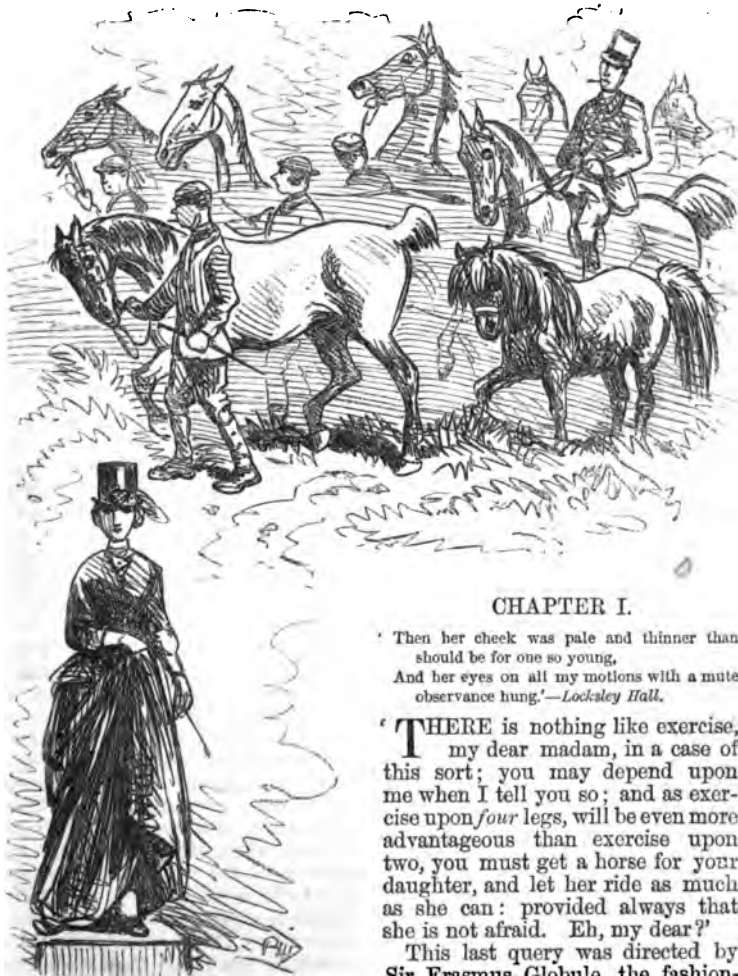
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LONDON SOCIETY.

JULY, 1864.

THE ADVENTURES OF A LADY IN SEARCH OF A HORSE.



CHAPTER I.

'Then her cheek was pale and thinner than
should be for one so young,
And her eyes on all my motions with a mute
observance hung.'—*Locksley Hall.*

'THERE is nothing like exercise,
my dear madam, in a case of
this sort; you may depend upon
me when I tell you so; and as exer-
cise upon *four* legs, will be even more
advantageous than exercise upon
two, you must get a horse for your
daughter, and let her ride as much
as she can: provided always that
she is not afraid. Eh, my dear?'

This last query was directed by
Sir Erasmus Globule, the fashion-

able physician of the day, to his youthful patient Miss Gloriana Apple-
VOL. VI.—NO. XXXII.

garde, who had been brought to him for advice, in one of those difficult cases in which general decline of bodily health takes place, without any ostensible or tangible cause. It had baffled the attempts of the country practitioner utterly to arrest, or even to understand it; and it was indeed at his recommendation that the shrewd and affable doctor (who had earned a world-wide fame more from quickness and penetration than from any deep learning or research) had been at last consulted by the anxious mother on her daughter's account.

Under his sunshiny influence the most desponding patient would become cheerful and re-assured; and in the case in question it was evident that he had hit upon a remedy acceptable to the invalid, for her pale cheek flushed, and her slender frame trembled with eagerness, as she replied, 'Afraid! oh no, indeed, Sir Erasmus; I have always had a passion for horses, although I have never had the opportunity of riding. I should like it better than anything in the world.'

It was, indeed, just as she said. As a child she had read of horses, dreamt of horses, and loved horses in that reckless, impassioned sort of way in which little girls are supposed to love only dolls or kittens; as she had grown older, she had never formed in imagination, a tale or a romance, in which a horse was not the principal hero, the biped being on every occasion entirely subordinate to the glorified quadruped. She had never found any difficulty in learning by heart any piece, prose or poetical, which treated of the all-engrossing subject; she had wept with James Fitz-James over the fate of the gallant horse that lay a-dying in the Highland glen, and believed that nothing in poetry equalled the pathos of the lines—

'Then touched with pity and remorse,
He sorrowed o'er the expiring horse;
"I little thought when first thy rein
I slack'd upon the banks of Seine,
That Highland eagle e'er should feed
On thy fleet limbs, my matchless steed.
Woe worth the chase! woe worth the day!
That cost thy life, my gallant grey;"'

or the majesty of those in 'The Battle of the Lake Regillus,' describing the noble grief of him who was 'the fleetest steed from Aufidus to Po:'—

'But like a graven image
Black Auster kept his place,
And ever wistfully he looked
Into his master's face.
The raven-mane that dally
With pats and fond caresses,
The young Herminia washed and combed,
And twined in even tresses,
And decked with coloured ribands,
From her own gay attire,
Hung sadly o'er her father's corpse,
In carnage and in mire;'

or the graphic force of those in the Spanish ballad, when the Cid displays his peerless charger, in the sight of the king and the courtiers, saying—

'But that your Majesty may see him,
And know him to the core,
I'll make him go as he was wont
When his nostrils smelt the Moor.'

After which gallant display of horsemanship, the science of the Cid is put to the last test, by the breaking of the bridle, when, equal to the occasion, in sight of the wondering crowd, he is seen 'proudly ruling' the fiery steed, 'with the fragment of his rein.'

Although the penetrating eye of Sir Erasmus Globule, aided by his wide experience, could hardly have enabled him to ascertain all this at a glance, it had enabled him, metaphorically speaking, to put his finger at once upon the seat of disease. Some employment, or amusement, which would act as a counterbalance to the mind subject to a brooding and overwhelming thought; some healthful exercise calculated to restore energy and buoyancy to the drooping frame: this was what experience told him was necessary for the recovery of his patient; and such employment and such amusement, experience had also told him, were more often productive of good results, when obtained through the agency of the 'four legs' (whose good offices we heard him bespeak in his facetious and amiably patronizing way, in the beginning of this chapter) than by the unassisted efforts of only two. Miss Apple-

garde's passion for horses, which had never before been in the way of being indulged, made the simple prescription of the great man, in this particular instance, one of his luckiest hits.

Had he not been the most reserved, as well as the most acute of men, he would naturally have questioned so tender a mother as Mrs. Applegarde, as to her daughter's tone of mind, and the circumstances into which she had been thrown; but he trusted to his own instinctive perception; and in that instance, as in most of those which came under his observation, he did not trust in vain. Never was guinea fee more easily, and at the same time more deservedly earned; and before the sound of the wheels of his brougham had died away, and mingled with the rumble of the distant streets, Mrs. Applegarde exclaimed, with enthusiasm, 'I am so glad, really, that we came to town; we never *should* have thought of your riding, should we, my dear?'

'I dare say not, mamma,' said Gloriana; 'but,' she added, with a spark of the old animation in look and voice, 'I like the idea very much, now that it is put into my head for me, as a thing that *can* be done. I have no doubt that I should have thought of it long ago, if it had only seemed to be in the least practicable. As it is, I cannot exactly see how it is to be managed.'

'I confess that I foresee a difficulty in the matter of procuring the animal,' Mrs. Applegarde remarked, deliberately, while a smile, tender, but rallying, played about her daughter's lips, as she answered—

'It is indeed that first difficulty of "catching your horse" which appears to me almost insurmountable: there will be no difficulty about the riding part of it, for that has been my day-dream all my life. We have no one to take into our council but Wells; and I do not suppose that he is much of a judge of horses, even should he be willing to help us, which I think more than doubtful.'

Gloriana had not uttered so many consecutive sentences, or appeared so much interested upon any sub-

ject, since her insidious illness had been gradually but surely gaining ground upon her life, which circumstance Mrs. Applegarde noted with delighted surprise, as she replied, 'I had no idea, my dear child, that you would have cared so much about it, or I would have procured you a horse long ago. But, to tell you the truth, such an event as your taking to riding never entered my head; and, with no gentleman to manage anything for us, there must always have been some little difficulty in the matter. Now that riding is ordered for you however by Sir Erasmus, for your health, it is a very different thing; and, in spite of difficulties, in whatever shape or form they present themselves, the thing must be done.'

It will be necessary here to explain, how it came to pass that so lovely a girl as Gloriana herself, and so elegant and attractive a woman as her widowed mother, should have to appear upon the list of 'unprotected females,' whose difficulties and dilemmas in the great battle of life have afforded a rich vein of amusement for those lovers of the grotesque and the incongruous, who are still chivalric enough to feel that there is a reproach to the male public, conveyed in the words themselves—that it should be possible for a 'female' to be made conscious of her unprotected state, when thrown upon the mercy of society in an advanced stage of civilization, is, we presume, the incongruity which excites the risible muscles of the stronger sex.

Hoping that it is so, we hasten to acquit the men of Mrs. Applegarde's acquaintance, and those honoured also by relationship to the fair widow and her daughters, from the reproach of want of taste, or want of feeling, which any backwardness on their part might well seem to imply. Mrs. Applegarde's isolated position in the world, had been entirely the result of her own self-chosen line of action. Naturally of a timid and retiring disposition, the great grief into which she had been plunged by the early loss of her husband, had given her an absolute distaste to society of any kind, with

the exception of that of her two orphan children, Gloriana and her sister Katherine (commonly called Kate), in whom every thought of her heart was centred. She had withdrawn herself so entirely from the world that the process of forgetting—never a difficult one in that busy quarter—had been very quietly accomplished on either side, and very near male relatives, or friends, Mrs. Applegarde, since her last brother-in-law's death, in the prime of his life, had none.

She had brought up her two young daughters in their cottage home, where they lived like three white doves in a cot, and in the enjoyment of a competence of about twelve hundred a year, which, with their small establishment, and moderate expenditure, might almost have come under the head of wealth.

Although, however, Park Side Cottage was, as we have shown, innocent of any male element whatsoever, in the higher grade of life, that small *ménage* was ruled with a rod of iron, by a domestic tyrant, in the shape of 'the old servant,' the treasure of the family, who had lived with Mr. Applegarde from his boyhood, and who, while he secretly worshipped every member of the family, manifested his inward affection, principally by the undesirable outward sign of general and indiscriminate intimidation.

Mr. Wells, the faithful and time-honoured butler, was, it must be owned, the head of the House of Applegarde. Since Gloriana's spirits and health had failed, indeed, no one had ventured to contradict or to thwart him in any one single particular. She had always been, as he expressed it, the most 'spirited' of the three; and, often and sorely as she had tried his domineering and irritable temperament, he would have given the famous receipt for plate-powder, which had gone down an heir-loom from father to son in his family for some generations, to have welcomed once again from her lips the bold defiance or the saucy repartee. It was Wells, indeed, who had first suggested to Mrs. Applegarde, that his young lady's lassitude and general

debility was assuming an alarming shape, and that, 'as far as he saw, Mr. Kempe'—the family apothecary, who had attended at Park Side Cottage on all occasions when juvenile epidemics had awoken the anxious fears of the mother for her little girls—'was no better than an old woman, for anything more out of the common than measles or whooping-cough. It's easy to see,' he continued, 'that he doesn't understand the case. It's all very well to say, "I ood, miss," if my young lady wishes to walk on the downs, with an east wind cutting like a razor, because she thinks it bracing; or "I oodn't, miss," if she takes it into her head not to go out in mild weather, because she considers it damp. But, without being able to see into a millstone, it's easy enough to see that he is a better judge of port wine, than he is of what's ailing Miss Gloriana—and has been for these weeks past.'

But one half, or one quarter of this harangue would have been sufficient to raise in Mrs. Applegarde's anxious breast, a thousand apprehensions for her daughter's health. Her husband, and several members of his family, had died of consumption; and the idea that her eldest child might be already drooping from the effects of that insidious and fatal disease, filled her with horror and dread.

The heart of Wells, indeed, bled inwardly as he saw the thin, transparent cheek of his beloved mistress grow white under the probe of his awakening words; but he steeled it with the reflection, which greater philosophers than he have made before him, there is *nothing so blind as the blindness of love*. It is one of the most painful things in life to witness that fatal blindness of affection for the danger which threatens its object—to hear a husband, or a parent, or a wife talk calmly of those 'to-morrows,' which, it is an evident fact to the eye of the most indifferent stranger, will never come—to see the eye of the foe in ambush glaring upon the unconscious victim, and know that in a few moments that the terrible spring will be made.

Cruel as the words might have appeared at first sight to be, they were dictated by the honest affection of the old servant for his late master's widow and child; and they did good service in the result, which was the well-timed advice of a sagacious doctor, who saw at a glance the best means of arresting the progress of the morbid and melancholy tone of mind, which was laying its withering finger day by day upon the health of the body. Such cases had doubtless come under the doctor's searching eye before; and the same remedy been prescribed perhaps in the same words; for the idea of 'exercise upon four legs being better than exercise upon two' was quite a joke in Sir Erasmus's estimation, and he was fond of a joke, that dapper, affable little man, the idol of the fashionable world.

It certainly sounded like a simple remedy enough: but how about the four legs in question? how about the blemishes, the spavins, the splints, the ring-bones, the string halts, the corns, the unsoundnesses, and all the subtle and incurable evils that those four legs in horse-flesh are heir to? How was it likely that three lovely and innocent women, and one aristocratic butler—to whom the 'noble animal,' as we were taught from our infancy to call the horse, was a quadruped unknown—could procure four sound and intact specimens of the article required, against, as it were, a world in arms? How indeed? The experienced in such matters will scarcely be inclined to agree with Mrs. Applegarde on the subject, who, in the exuberance of her maternal solicitude, declared that the matter 'would be easy enough, if they only set about it the right way.' An easy solution to all the problems which life offers for our consideration, if in that 'right way' itself did not lie the pith and the centre of our bewilderment.

'Don't be volatile, Kate,' she added, addressing her youngest daughter, a mischievous sprite, who was ready enough to make fun of the council of sages assembled, in congress, to discuss the momentous question; 'don't be fool-

ish, my dear, but help us to think what is best to be done under the circumstances. What do you think now of an advertisement, in the "Greyminster Herald?" I can write one out at once:' and taking a sheet of note-paper, and seating herself at the elegantly-appointed writing-table, she began to write with much appearance of determination; quoting herself, as she concluded, the first word, of the first sentence, which was the comprehensive word seen in such endless repetition in the columns of the 'Times'—the word 'Wanted.'

'There,' she said with an air of innocent triumph, in her progress so far in the *right* road to achievement—'I have written that; and now, Mr. Wells'—Mrs. Applegarde thus addressed her *butler*, in the dignity of office, although the *man* to her was, for the sake of old associations, sometimes 'Wells,' but oftener than all, simple 'James'—'now we must consider what it is that we *do* want.'

And at this stage of the proceedings, it must be confessed, that the right way became less clear, and that Mrs. Applegarde became painfully conscious of an incapacity, which is common to many, of saying lucidly, or even grammatically, what she did want, when that was to assume the dignity of a 'local habitation and a name' in the advertising sheet of a newspaper. What terrible confusion of the cases of nouns proper and substantive, and what a reckless disregard of the situation of corresponding adjectives, do not such columns daily present, for the mystification of mankind? Why, for instance, should a respectable divine, of average dimensions, and the usual bulk of well-grown humanity, hold out his own diminutive stature as a recommendation to the tenement which he is anxious to let? Why should he take a sort of imbecile and morbid satisfaction, in appearing in the public chronicles of the day, under the depreciating, and, as it appears to us, 'Heep'-ishly 'umble' title of 'a small clergyman'?

Why did Mrs. Applegarde, who was diffident and retiring to a fault,

write down three sentences, each calculated to convey—by implication at least—an unseemly exultation in the charms of her eldest daughter to a supercilious and gainsaying world? ‘A pretty lady’s horse,—A quiet lady’s hack,—A handsome lady’s pony,’ she read aloud, with unblushing cheek, and unfaltering voice, quietly appealing to the daughter so described as to ‘which she should leave?’ ‘Or shall I say,’ she continued, warming to her work, and getting vaguely glib upon the subject, ‘Wanted a horse, for a lady in delicate health, pretty to look at, and not too tall, with a long mane and tail, and must be quiet, and well recommended. Price not such an object as a suitable animal. Apply at Park Side Cottage, Ambledown.’

‘Oh no, mamma, that really won’t do at all,’ said Gloriana, now thoroughly roused from the languor which had taken such a hold upon her, and awakened such anxious fears on her account. ‘If you send that, we shall have all the screws in the country sent for our inspection. I don’t care, either, about having a regular cantering lady’s horse; I should like to have one that I could make myself.’ Here I must mention that, owing to circumstances (which I do not feel called upon at this stage of the ‘Adventures’ to explain), Gloriana had heard more about horses than any of the party assembled. That she had read more about them, too, I mentioned before; but the hero horses, the ‘Austers,’ and the ‘Bevises,’ and the ‘Biavicas’ of romance, resembled no more the everyday horses that she was likely to meet in real life, than did their shadowy warrior riders the sporting youths in knickerbockers, with their hands in their pockets, and cigars in their mouths, whom she had met with ‘up at the park.’

Book knowledge, however, and knowledge confined to mere hearsay, upon any subject, is soon fathomed and exhausted; and in personal experience with regard to them, she was as innocent and as ignorant as the rest of the party. ‘We need not mention the height,’ she

went on to say; ‘I have heard people say that a lady always looks better on a horse that is rather high.’ The reader will observe that the young lady forbore the word *tall* in describing a horse, which her mother had made use of.

‘I would not have a helephant, either, miss,’ remarked Wells, sententiously, who entertained a well-founded horror of anything too much exalted in the shape of a horse, always taking into consideration the probability of a ‘fall.’

‘The Duke has been thrown, I hear,’ remarked one of the field to the huntsman of a celebrated pack, and in reference to an enthusiastic sportsman, who could not ride. ‘His grace fell off,’ was the short and pointed reply; and it was no doubt with reference to such a contingency, that Mr. Wells delivered his oracular sentence, on the occasion in question. His young mistress had never ridden before. It was more than probable that in the first days of her initiation, she would meet with the catastrophe which befel the unlucky nobleman; and without any particular co-operation on the part of the horse, find it incumbent upon her inexperience to ‘fall off.’ ‘I should say that a good-sized pony would answer all purposes, and be easier to get on and off.’

‘So it would, James,’ said his mistress, who in this case recognized and approved the feelings of the man. ‘I should not be so nervous about a pony, when Gloriana takes her first rides.’

‘But is Glorry to ride by herself?’ observed Kate, suggesting thereby a new difficulty; for it had not entered into the calculations of this family council that somebody would be required to ‘ride after’ Miss Applegarde, or that that somebody must, of necessity, come under the head of a class held in the utmost abhorrence by Mr. Wells, belonging to the genus, groom. A respectable, full-blown coachman, who had nothing to do but to handle the reins of his equally fat carriage-horses, was the nearest approach to the region of the stable, which that stately official could tolerate between the wind and his nobility.

At Kate's remark, therefore, Mr. Wells experienced that sort of mental revulsion described by the sensation novelist under the type of an earthquake—'if an earthquake had opened under his feet he could not have been more staggered, or his senses been merged into such utter or irremediable confusion,' et cetera, et cetera. The effect of this curious mental phenomenon, in this instance, was that it presented to the imagination of the individual most concerned, a series of dissolving views, each one more unwelcome and more clearly defined than the last.

The vision of an intruder at all into the precincts of that refined and aristocratic establishment was cruel enough; but when another rapidly took its place, of a saucy upstart, looking upon the lovely housemaid, or the good-natured cook, with the aspiring glance of love: of a low wretch, strengthening by open rebellion, or secret strategy, the scarcely stifled faction existing between the kitchen and the house-keeper's room: of an earthworm who, as reigning monarch of the stable, would beard and defy the autocrat of the pantry—the feelings of the victim are more easily imagined than described. The countenance of the great man generally so immovable, must have betrayed the contending emotions that were at war in his soul; for the contemplation of it provoked Gloriana into remarking, with one of her old smiles, 'You see in what an undertaking we are embarked. "Exercise upon four legs" is an easy thing to talk about; but in our singularly *unhorsey* establishment we are involved in a difficulty every way we turn. Fortunately, there are stables; but where shall we find a respectable, trustworthy groom?'

'Where indeed?' said Mrs. Applegarde, nervously, for she had seen the cloud gathering on the brow of the faithful Wells, as the objectionable word had passed her daughter's lips: 'this is indeed an unforeseen difficulty.'

'And what is he to ride? You must advertise for two horses, whilst you are about it, mother dear,' put

in Kate, suggestively. 'Sir Erasmus might have made more of his prescription, and of his joke, for there must be eight legs in it after all, to say nothing of the additional biped.'

'Oh Kate! Kate! you are incorrigible. I really do not see though what is to be done, unless you could find some riding companions, my dear.'

'What a pity the young Squire, and Miss Levison, are away from the park,' remarked Mr. Wells; and at this speech a crimson flush rushed painfully into Gloriana's pale cheek: to divert attention from which circumstance it was, I have no doubt, that she said so hastily: 'Why can't I have a pony, and then surely there could be no harm in my riding about the park, the commons, and these quiet lanes by myself? Let me write the advertisement, mamma, please, and we will see first what comes of that:' and taking the pen from her mother's hand, she sat down, and, after a little meditation, wrote as follows:—'Wanted, immediately, a good-sized pony, strong, handsome, temperate; warranted sound; that will carry a lady. Apply to Mr. Wells, Park Side Cottage, Ambledown.'

'It is better to imply that there is a man in the case,' the young lady added; 'we are less likely to be done.'

'Certainly, miss,' said the now gratified Wells, with a condescending air of lofty superiority; 'it is by far the better plan.' And smiling the bland smile, which proclaimed that the irascible temperament had accepted and swallowed the sop artfully prepared for its sensitive palate, he condescended himself to be the bearer of the important missive, to the post-office in the village, hard by.

Now there might have been just visible to the naked eye of an ordinary mortal, not bent upon reading aright the riddle of that impassable countenance, the sign of a latent chuckle, hovering round the corners of the mouth, which one of the 'close observers,' so often called to the aid of the story teller and the novelist, would have traced at once to some mysterious cause, deep

hidden in the portly bosom of the man; but as the quiet country village in question afforded neither sage nor philosopher so profound, and recognized Mr. Wells only in his haughty official capacity, the secrets of the human breast were not, in this instance, doomed to be betrayed, and the words which might have revealed their import to the 'earnest inquirer' were muttered to the empty air.

'So the wind lies that way, does it?' he observed twice, when indulging in the habit of absent and preoccupied people, of talking to himself—'so the wind lies that way;' and that he employed a metaphor, while making this profound statement for his own personal edification would have been apparent to the aforesaid 'close observer,' or patent-novelist-human-breast-penetrator, from the fact that his eyes were bent upon the ground at his feet, and that the gilt weathercock on the church steeple before him was not called upon, in either instance, either to warrant or corroborate the announcement.

The advertisement, the wording of which had been so carefully considered by the inmates of Park Side Cottage, was in time for insertion the same week in the columns of the 'Greyminster Herald;' and from that date it must be allowed that the 'parties' in question entered upon a new phase of existence, and became subject to the anomalous infiction of a *daily nightmare*, in the shape of horses with three legs to go upon, horses with two, and horses with none; of horses too high, and horses too low; of high-couraged horses, whose grooms could not hold them; and of lean and hungry horses, that might have formed models for Don Quixote's Rosinante; of high-stepping carriage, and even brougham horses; and of low, shuffling ponies; of young horses; of old horses; of bay horses; of dun horses; of iron-grey, and chestnut horses; of bad horses; of vicious horses; of lame horses; of used-up horses; of horses of every style, stamp, and condition, that could be utterly and entirely useless to a young lady in delicate health, who

wished to indulge in a daily canter round the home lanes and commons, in accordance with the advice of her shrewd London physician.

'Let us decide upon buying the next that comes, that seems in the least likely to do,' said Gloriana, at last, wearied with the daily and almost hourly arrival of the regiments of screws that offered themselves for the inspection of four pair of eager eyes, all equally ignorant and inexperienced, and all equally determined not on any account to be done. As she spoke, the door opened, and the butler announced the arrival of another man, and another horse, 'or cob, as he calls it,' he further condescended to explain; for it must be acknowledged that the temper of Mr. Wells had undergone a severe ordeal, and his dignity been much compromised, by the endurance of unseemly chaff and ridicule, from low-minded individuals belonging to the genus groom.

'Let us have round the horse, or cob, then, or whatever he likes to call it,' said Gloriana, languidly. And in compliance with her request, an essentially 'useful animal,' accompanied by a scampish and very horsey-looking attendant, soon made his appearance at the hall door. 'The cob' was not at all a bad shape, compact, made for strength, and in size something between a horse and a pony, as his name denoted. His hairy legs, however, and coarse head, showed his underbreeding, and detracted much from his merits in the eyes of the ladies.

It was evident that Mr. Wells strongly affected him; and a dose of flattery, not too finely drawn, from the broken-down horsedealer, did more than he would have willingly acknowledged towards securing his good word for the cob.

'I don't like his head,' observed Miss Applegarde, objectively; 'it is so large and clumsy-looking.'

'Large, ma'am, do you call it?' said the man, with an air of well-feigned surprise. And then measuring, through a half-closed but infinitely cunning glance, the amount of *flatness* with which he had to deal, he gathered up all the effrontery of his nature, and rode over the last



THE COB "BUDGETS."

Drawn by P. H. A.

fence between the cob, and Mr. Wells's good graces in this remarkable and original sentence: 'Why, any one that knows about an oss,'—and here he winked knowingly at the butler, to insinuate that he was included in the respectable category, —'any one that knows about an oss, knows that *his strength lies in his head*. This here cob is the strongest and the 'andsomest in England: and it would be no use of my abusing him to you, sir, because I can see with 'alf an eye that you knows what an oss is.'

Now, Mr. Wells, although a man of exalted mind and unimpeachable integrity, was a mortal man after all, and, like other mortals, found it impossible to resist the influence of the flattery that had not a leg to stand upon.

If the horsedealer of broken-down appearance had presumed to remark upon the glitter of the family plate, or to enlarge upon the value of the receipt for plate-powder, which had been handed down as an heirloom from father to son for three generations, the vulnerable point in Mr. Wells's nature would have remained untouched—he would have seen through and despised the attempt upon his understanding at once. But to be told openly, and by implication, that 'he knew what a horse was,' seeing that he knew nothing whatever about horses in general, or any horse in particular, was the little pebble out of the brook against which, properly propelled, his giant strength was as nought.

Flatter a beautiful, foolish woman upon her intellect, and a plain, clever woman upon her good looks; tell your literary friend, of undeveloped muscularity, that he is first-rate across country, and your sporting friend, who can barely spell, that he would write brilliant articles, and the grossness of the flattery will neither be resented nor perceived, but, on the contrary, it will be imbibed with the greatest relish and gusto.

It is so with frail humanity generally; nor did Mr. Wells in this instance belie his mortal origin. His heart opened towards the man,

and towards the strong but ugly brute who was the object of eulogy; and he assumed in their behalf his most pompous and oracular manner as he slowly pronounced the emphatic sentence—

'I think this is decidedly the best animal we have seen, ma'am,' while his eyes wandered with unwonted admiration from the short, thick legs, to the long carcase and clumsy head of the 'andsomest cob in England.'

The gentle, ladylike, still pretty widow was out upon the lawn, surveying this last specimen of horse-flesh which had been presented to her discriminating gaze, through her eyeglass, and she said, when thus appealed to, with the candour that was natural to her—

'I cannot say that I think him pretty; but if he is quiet and gentle I shall be satisfied, as Miss Applegarde has had no experience in riding as yet; but is ordered to do it for her health,' she added, turning, as she spoke, to address the horsedealer, with that trustful and appealing gaze, which is natural to a fond mother when her child's health and safety are the matters at issue, and which might have possibly touched the 'better nature' of the hardened ruffian in question, for he replied fluently enough—

'It was what I thought, ma'am, when I seed the advertisement; and ses I to myself, Why there's the brown cob, Brutus, as I had off General Hunter, as will carry the lady like a lamb. No wice or nonsense about him; warranted sound, neat as paint, and a bargain at forty guineas, which is his price, and dirt cheap too at the money.'

'I should really think he is worth it, mamma,' said Gloriana, decisively: 'we have looked at so many, and I don't think we have seen anything more likely to suit us. Suppose that you write a cheque, and let the man leave the horse.'

The moment of decision, however, was always more or less an uneasy one to Mrs. Applegarde; and at such times the feeling of her unprotected state, and of her 'lone and lorn' condition, was wont to intrude upon her with melancholy force.

'If we had only been able to consult some one who really understands about horses,' she began, nervously and unconsciously, but rudely trampling under foot the new-born vanity in the breast of Mr. Wells: 'it strikes me forcibly that there is a wicked expression about the eye of this horse, and I don't quite like the way in which he moves his ears about when you approach him.'

To this remark the horsedealer vouchsafed no direct reply; but making as though he were about to lead the injured Brutus off at once, he said, addressing himself to the butler, 'If the lady's no buyer, I can't waste my time; the cob's a real good un, and there's twenty after him as it is.'

'I don't presume to offer an opinion,' was the majestic reply: and the tone and manner in which it was made, awoke Mrs. Applegarde to the conviction, that the feelings of her faithful domestic had been lacerated in some vital part, and that nothing but the most abject humiliation on her side would pour balm into the cruel wound.

Once aware of the fact, she hastened, with her usual kindness, to soothe the feelings that her thoughtless words had ruffled, and to make the *amende honorable* by saying at once, 'It is your opinion that we must act upon: and it is with Mr. Wells that you must deal,' she added,

as the horsedealer maintained a somewhat sulky and impertinent demeanour, while awaiting the result of the conference. 'If he approves of the horse I am quite willing to purchase him.'

It is scarcely necessary to add, after this, that the deal was concluded, and that the renowned Brutus was left upon the hands of the ladies of Park Side Cottage, to whom the question thus became a matter of paramount importance, 'What they could make of him?'

Mr. Wells himself exhibited a certain amount of nervous agitation, when the last glimpse of the figure of the horsedealer had told itself off in the direction of the nearest public; but recovering his usual dignity by a strong effort of will, he knowingly avoided the responsibility of handling the cob himself, and assuming a magisterial air, commanded the small boy, who did what country people call 'odds and ends' in the house and garden, to lead the horse to the stable, which had been ready prepared for the advent of an animal of some sort or another.

'Your father understands about horses, Bill,' he began, thus paving the way to a negotiation which he had had in his mind since the introduction of the horse subject at Park Side; 'just ask him to step up this evening, and have a glass of ale, will you?'

(To be continued.)



THE PARIS SEASON.

I DESIGN, my dear Mr. Editor, to give you a cursory summary and review of our Paris season. I have innumerable jottings and memoranda; but as you can hardly spare me thirty pages, I must make some alarming sacrifices. I must not regret this. The brilliant things of Paris are so evanescent that most of my novelties would be time-worn before my papers become proofs. You remember the Duke's song in Verdi's opera, 'Rigoletto,' 'Comme la plume au vent:' that is the Parisian all over, and each object of the phantasmagoria of the Parisian season. That season, I suppose, even combining the word in an enlarged and liberal season, must be presumed to be over now, and, therefore, I review it after a somewhat moralizing and historical manner. In one sense there is an everlasting season, and fashion is queen all the year round. The *Corps Legislatif* has just broken up. The Emperor and the court are off to Fontainebleau. I was down there a few days ago, reviving my Napoleonic memories, and attempting to realize the modern life of the forest. The Empress, they told me, had been just before me, like a good housewife, seeing that everything was in good order for her lord and his guest, rejoicing in the magnificent furniture of her magnificent abode, and with dainty finger tapping each spot that required the attention of the domestics. And now to give you, as definitely as such an indefinite subject permits, and with the freedom of an old correspondent, my souvenirs and impressions. What a magnificent yet childish people they are! In Lord Macaulay's essay on Horace Walpole, in one of his most striking antitheses, he tells us that serious business was a trifle to him and trifles were his serious business. Now this very accurately describes our Parisian society. The senate is making laws by batches and making money by millions. Guizot has been protesting against infidelity. Thiers has been making a great historical speech. There are diplomatic complications about Denmark. There are new difficulties about Mexico. There are conversational trifles for the afternoon hour at the cafés on the Boulevards, where the Parisian prepares himself for dinner with his iced *absinthe* and other cooling beverages. Let us turn to more important matters. The

Duc de Morny has got a new horse. The Duchesse de Morny has come out in a new costume. The monster balloon ascends next Sunday. Have you met the Japanese ambassadors? Have you been to the Empress's Mondays? What do you think of the new opera by Gounod, or the new drama by Lemaitre, or the chances of the favourites for the French Derby, French Oaks at Chantilly, or the Grand Prix de Paris?

Very gratefully and charmingly did spring break upon us in Paris. She made one or two false starts before she was fairly off. Easter was bleak, and after some glorious but fallacious days, we had boreal winds and sleet and snow. And then sudden and splendid came the revivification, and broad expanses of light green, massed with noble effect, relieved the Tuileries and Luxembourg, and soon the orange-trees were borne into the open air. The pleasant country-side of Paris put on a beauty which the Parisians themselves can only faintly appreciate, and the roll of carriages along the favourite avenues became broader and more persistent. Driving one afternoon down the Champs Elysées, the sensible Empress was encountered taking her airing just as all the other carriages were going homewards. This showed that the season was turned, and henceforward there is an evening rather than an afternoon promenade in the Bois de Boulogne. And then the receipts of the in-door places of amusement have fallen off, and those of the out-door places have fallen in, and some of the theatre have their *déture*, and the pleasant Théâtre des Iles and the Pré Catelan have opened. And the Champs Elysées are vocal with Musard's fine music and the strains of the Café Chantant, and Leotard is leaping about the roof of the Cirque de l'Impératrice, and the band is playing every day in the gardens of the Tuileries, and the booths, and the Punches and the merry-go-rounds are in full spring, and the first stream of Swiss tourists, distinguishable by their alpenstocks, are passing through Paris, and I recognize my fellow-Britons by each salon and salle à manger of the hotels I know, promenading on the Boulevards, or staring into the shops on the arcaded Rue du Rivoli, and thronging to see all the civil sights and buildings which the well-fingered Gali-

gnani instructs them to inspect. The season may be over with the Faubourg St. Germain, but it is the height of the season with every one else in the brilliant spring.

But let me speak of the English colony in Paris rather than of the passing tourists. They indeed deserve a distinct mention, for with the English in Paris the past season has been unusually gay, that is for a *triste* people, 'who take their pleasure sadly.' There was the great ball given for the British Charitable Fund at the Grand Hôtel. This was successful enough, and realized about eight hundred pounds for the charity. More than a thousand tickets were taken; but the magnificent rooms are so spacious that at no time were they crowded; but then all the tickets taken were not used, and many people only stopped a short time and then went away to less crowded parties. These balls have been intermitted of late years, but the success of this was so promising that they may be looked upon as re-established. One complaint was made very loudly, and it is worth mentioning in the hope that matters may be rectified next year. The napoleon charged for the ticket ought to have included some slight refreshment. Not only was this not the case, but the commissariat department was vilely managed. The *insouciant* waiters were ill-instructed, and fainting belles clamoured long and vainly for even a biscuit and a glass of lemonade. Fired with a noble emulation at the pecuniary success of the ball, some promising Englishmen got up some English private theatricals on the behalf and behoof of the English Charitable Fund. Another version of the transaction states that there was a very languid enthusiasm for the charity, and a very keen desire for a little social enjoyment and amusement. The performances extended over two nights, and included, among other pieces, 'The Wonderful Woman,' and 'Still Waters Run Deep.' The company were unfortunate in their attempt to find a suitable theatre, and the affair came off in the out-of-the-way Théâtre des Jeunes Artistes. The edifice was arranged very nicely internally, with a box for the Emperor and Empress, who did not come, but who subsequently sent a thousand francs for the benefit of the object for which the theatricals were got up. The Emperor's gift apart, the amusement was a financial failure. The promoters were anxious to do the thing nicely and went to great expenses, such as the small size of the boxes, even supposing very

many tickets were sold, would hardly permit of being reimbursed. There were no assets for the Charitable Fund, and the projectors were out of pocket until the Imperial remittance arrived, and I am uncertain whether this sum will go to the Charity or help to pay for the expense of the 'lark.' It was another unfortunate item in the affair that a talented American actress of considerable repute in Paris was treated by the inexperienced amateurs in a fashion from which she would have been saved by any regular London or Parisian manager. It is said, however, that we are to have a regular English theatre next winter. The English people were to have eaten and drunk together, after the fashion of their race, on the Shakespeare tercentenary under the kindly presidency of Lord Gray of Gray. You have heard how the Government interdicted all intended banquets, probably bearing in mind the important political aspect which banquets have assumed in the modern history of France. The prohibition was withdrawn, so far as related to the English banquet; but the thing was practically spoilt, and under the circumstances of the official snub which had occurred, the English declined to do honour to the memory of Shakespeare save at their own homes. The British Embassy has been a scene of unwonted brilliancy. Not for many years had there been such splendid balls at the familiar hôtel in the Faubourg St. Honoré as the two which Earl Cowley gave this season, besides the magnificent dinner-party in which he celebrated the birthday of our queen. It is a noble mansion which the English Government purchased many years ago for about one-tenth of the money which it would fetch at present in the immensely improved value of house property under the Imperial system. The conservatories branching off into the fine garden are especially vast and splendid, and the whole lower range of apartments thrown into them presented a scene of fairy-like beauty which artists would have been glad to have reproduced. Such festal days had hardly been known since the era of Lord Normanby. Let us not also forget to mention the various substantial amusements in vogue among the English. The Paris Cricket Club is now an established institution associated with the best names in French and Anglo-French society. The French are taking hugely to the game. A piece of ground on the Pelouse de Madrid in the Bois has been assigned to the Club, and matches

are continually coming off. There was a very good one the other day between the club and the Nottingham Eleven, mostly working men, whom Sir Robert Clifton generously brought over at his own expense. The Nottingham men easily beat their Parisian opponents, and in every respect showed in how gentlemanly a manner English working men can behave. The Emperor drove past while the match was playing, and seemed much gratified by the reception he received. The origin of the club is due to Mr. T. H. Sparkes, a name very familiar to Anglo-Parisians, and to whom they are all under great obligations for inaugurating various pleasant and useful designs and in carrying them out in a spirit and manner which reflect credit on the English name in a foreign land.

So much for the English section of Parisian society. I go on to speak of it as a whole. I think it is poor Thackeray, in his 'Parisian Sketchbook,' who says you may live thirty years in Paris before you really know the *vie intime* of Parisian society, and may not know it then. The best way to understand it is to marry a Frenchwoman. But then it becomes an open question, as the young nobleman in 'Pickwick' observed, on the occasion of arriving at the end of the alphabet, 'whether it is worth while going through so much to get so little.' Still one has friends who have so committed themselves, and one may profit by their experience. Let us walk for a while on the Boulevards. They say that Paris is the brain of France, and the Boulevard des Italiens is the brain of Paris. Among other things, this boulevard has been well called the Rialto of musical rumour. Is Gounod very much cut up by the failure of 'Mireille'? Will Meyerbeer's posthumous opera, 'L'Africaine,' be really brought out? The names of the great composers, the latest arrangements of the Grand Opera, are discussed in that open drawing-room which Paris holds every evening on the Boulevards. Let us hurry through some of the topics of Paris talk of late. I shall only be imitating French custom if I tell you nothing, or if I tell you what you know already—two classes of subjects which here are always provocatives of incessant conversation. The case of Dr. La Pommerais is melodramatic to a Frenchman's own heart; and people read the evidence very carefully on the Boulevards in the 'Gazette des Tribunaux,' or discussed its bearings, without being at all struck by the unfairness of the judge towards the pri-

soner, which, notwithstanding his manifest guilt, would have caused great excitement in England. Then the speeches of M. Rouher and the Duc de Persigny have been matters of great gratulation to the supporters—always growing more numerous—of the present dynasty. The Conference is a never-ceasing subject of conversation and speculation, and the whole series of public events—Lord Clarendon's visit, the Mexican loan, the Japanese ambassadors, the Pope's illness, Garibaldi. Some of the English visitors attracted great attention. Captain Speke was lionized at the French Geographical Society. The gallant captain was very adroit in his compliments to the French; said that the gold medal they had given him some years ago spurred him on to run till he should drop; expressed his conviction that he had another great lake to discover, and suggested that France might found another empire in these regions, and send out a second Maximilian to reign over a second empire founded by Napoleon III. The Empress had a long conversation with Captain Speke on these ideas. Lord Brougham has also been here, on his way back from Cannes, welcomed, as usual, by his brethren of the Institute, and, one of the papers remarked, dressed much better than usual; but I was concerned to hear from a man who dined with him the other night, that he talks very little, a sign of an altered state of things. The Hôtel Bristol has, as usual, abounded with members of our House of Lords; and so many members from the House of Commons came over, that it was suggested that a certain train should be called the parliamentary train. The Academy of Moral Science have made Mr. Grote Foreign Associate, and have elected Dean Stanley Correspondent for the section of History, in the room of Mr. Grote. Then we had an English deputation over here to the French Society for the Protection of Animals, who talked a good deal of French, and talked it rather well. Lord Harrowby was at the head of the deputation, and Lord Ebury, who is often over in Paris, 'assisted' therat. It is remarkable that the Frenchman looks upon every Englishman as a barbarian who cannot speak French; and yet how very few Frenchmen we find who can speak English with any accuracy. I wish, by the way, that this useful French society would take vigorous action against vivisection, of which my medical friends give most horrible descriptions.

I imagine that the most conspicuous

member of French society at the present moment is the Duc de Morny. In personal appearance he is very like the Emperor, and might easily be mistaken for him, save that he is the finer man of the two. Everything that the duke does is done brilliantly well. Everything that he touches seems to turn to gold. He possesses a versatility which rises to positive genius. There is no department of Parisian life, grave or gay, public or social, in which the duke does not excel. The other day at the Princess Mathilde's he brought out his clever little piece, 'No smoke, but some flame.' Only the other day, too, he closed the Legislative Chambers, over which he presided with such infinite judgment and tact. It was with a pleasant joke that he dismissed them. He told them the little story how, when Marshal Soult was in power, everyone admitted that he had won the battle of Toulouse; and when he was out of office many declared their conviction that he had lost it. But he has wonderful skill 'in making things go pleasant.' But whether he is planning a coup d'état, or making a party go off well; or whether it is the turf, or fine arts, or literature, or public works, he is the most adroit and successful of men. Everybody comes to him about everything; and he is the most influential of Frenchmen. Such a combination of eloquence, action, and accomplishment, make him one of the most popular of men. So, after all 'there is nothing so successful as success!'

But I presume I ought to speak a little of the imperial family. First, then, the Emperor. The lumbago has been very bad; and I suppose he will try Vichy again. No waters like the Vichy waters in their own especial way. You see the Emperor driving himself about in his phaeton with the utmost sense of security in the most miscellaneous parts of Paris. He was limping at the private review of the French Exhibition; and gazing earnestly at Winterhalter's picture of the Prince Imperial with his rifle, on the steps of the palace of St. Cloud; and then going carefully over the battle-pictures with grim recollections of Solferino and Magenta. Doubtless he looked very carefully at the picture of Solferino itself, which I mention elsewhere. Besides Winterhalter's there are two other pictures of the Prince Imperial. One is by Debras (515 of the Catalogue) of the Prince driving through the gates of Bagatelle—the villa of an English nobleman whom he often visits. The other is by Armand Dumarisque, 'Promenade de

S. A. Monseigneur le Prince Impérial,' with two outriders and a group of Spahis. The little Prince's duty of acknowledging all salutations appears a source of unfailing enjoyment to him, and he does it very gracefully. The fêtes he gave to the children in the gardens of the Tuileries the other Sunday ought to make him very popular with his young contemporaries; mountains of cakes, rivers of sweet drinks, and the Champs Elysées cleared of most of its customary amusement for their special delectation. The ordinary British tourist, of domesticated habits and strong family feelings, is not easily brought to admire the out-door arrangements of the imperial family. You never by any chance see the husband and wife driving out together, nor yet the mother and child. Each of the trio has a separate cortège. Sometimes in the Bois de Boulogne the carriage of the Emperor passes the carriage of the Empress, and there is an exchange of a very grand and a very graceful bow. Winterhalter's portrait of the Empress gives us a very pretty face, but gives it an expression of unhappiness, which I trust is not habitual. People are saying that Winterhalter's best days are past as a portrait-painter.

Every now and then we hear of the very comparative liberty of the subject being checked, after the approved imperial fashion. The *entresol* of Numero 7, Rue de la Paix, is very well known in Paris. On Sundays the American Episcopalians worship there, while their new and handsome church is being built off the Champs Elysées; and on most nights of the week there have been highly successful 'Lectures et Entretiens.' One night of the season M. Lesseps ventilated his Suez scheme there. One of the lecturers was officially 'invited to suspend his lectures'—M. Frédéric Morin; he was to speak on a purely literary subject, but he is known to entertain liberal opinions. The other night a French lady invited a dinner-party of twenty to meet Messieurs Garnier Pages and Pelletan. She was waited on by a *commissaire*, who told her that such a numerous meeting was illegal. Then, again, there was the suspension of the French dinner on the Shakespeare anniversary, because an empty chair was to be left for Victor Hugo, and a letter to be read in place of his speech. I need not speak of the constant confiscation of our newspapers, except the 'Times,' which, by the Emperor's orders, is never confiscated.

The mortuary record of the season is

a rather crowded one. The Duke of Malakoff, a great historical name, is gone. He had necessarily many friends in England, where he was ambassador after Persigny. 'France has lost a great man, and I a great friend,' said the Emperor when he heard of it. The Parisian wits have been saying that he smelt gunpowder from his cradle, since his father was a gunpowder merchant. Few losses made a more melancholy sensation in Parisian society than the death of Baron Solomon de Rothschild, the son of Baron James. He was only twenty-six, only married two years ago, and only ill a few hours. He lived in the Faubourg St. Honoré; and life seemed to smile more happily upon him than upon most men. On the occasion of his death his father devoted a large sum of money to the relief of the poor—an example worthy of imitation. I ought not to omit the loss of Mr. Bowes, who for many years was the editor of 'Galignani's Messenger'—the paper that so marvellously hits all the wants of the English on the Continent. Every now and then a spasmodic effort is made to rival Galignani by some paper issued at Paris—generally once a week; but only a few numbers appear previous to death by inanition. But no other loss has to the same degree moved the public as the death of Meyerbeer, which is a personal misfortune to every one to whom the language of sweet sounds is intelligible. Though he was interred at Berlin, he had made himself thoroughly a Parisian; and only shortly before his death had been thoroughly occupying himself with his various musical plans and arrangements. I am afraid to dwell much on the subject, lest I should be furnishing you with details which have been already anticipated. Few, however, appear to have known of that remarkable paper found in his portfolio, inscribed, 'Pour être ouvert après ma mort.' The great composer appears to have been haunted by the idea that he might be buried alive. These are the directions which he left:—*'On doit me laisser couché sur mon lit, la figure découverte, tel que j'étais avant de mourir, pendant quatre jours et le cinquième jour on pratiquera des incisions sur l'artère brachiale ainsi qu'au pied.'* He also left directions that two men should watch him night and day in case he should give any signs of life; and also that small bells should be placed on his hands and feet. There are touching allusions to his family, and the paper ends with the pious words—'The will of God be done,

and His name be blessed in heaven and earth.' On the day of the funeral the Grand Opera gave 'Les Huguenots'; it would, however, have been a more sincere mark of respect if on such an occasion the house had been closed. Did you hear of the incident about Rossini? For fifty years he had been the friend of Meyerbeer. Calling at the Rue Montaigne to make a friendly inquiry respecting his health, he was abruptly told by the concierge that Meyerbeer was dead. Rossini staggered, and would have fallen if he had not been caught up. Entering the house to see the daughter of Meyerbeer, he embraced her, and burst into tears. It was some time before he was in a fit state to return home. All Paris was profoundly moved by this unexpected demise. For forty years the great author of 'Robert,' the 'Huguenots,' and the 'Prophet,' had been the great favourite of Paris, better understood and better loved even than in Germany. Funeral marches from his own operas were played during the progress of the procession from the Champs Elysées to the Northern Railway. Auber, the composer, held the cords of the pall; and deputations, which included the Institute, the Opera, the Conservatoire, were in attendance. Military honours were rendered by some companies of the National Guard. Some one bought up all the flowers from the pretty garden by the Madeleine, and strewed them in front of the hearse. He left a large fortune, partly derived from his wealthy parent, but the bulk, I imagine, from his works. Surely Disraeli had Meyerbeer in his eye in certain passages of 'Tancred.'

The Italian Opera calls for a few words. The season has been more brilliant and more prolonged than it was last year. M. Bagier has shown the utmost energy, which has been crowned with a fair measure of success. The great fact of the season was unquestionably Adelina Patti. She excited the Gallic enthusiasm to an unprecedented height. A certain young Russian, when the 'Barber of Seville' was performed, rained down bouquets ornamented with jewellery, one of them containing a letter addressed to the cantatrice demonstrative of his personal devotion. The bouquets and the letter were returned to him through the unpoetical medium of the police. The Patti enthusiasm culminated at the young prima donna's benefit. The beneficiary and the audience were on the very best mutual terms; and as

their kindly feelings were more and more manifested, she surpassed herself—her acting and singing with electrical effect, and looking the very picture of happiness. At the end of each *morceau*—for the evening was made a selection from operas—the bouquets came showering down—roses, camellias, white lilies, and chaplets with golden leaves. A very floral conservatory could have been gathered out of the abundance of the display of flowers. When the entertainment had terminated with an air from 'L'Elisir d'Amore,' the curtain had to be raised three or four times that the ordinarily reserved and critical public of the Salle Ventadour might give vent to their passionate admiration. It is now arranged that Patti is to come again next season, instead of going to St. Petersburg as she had contemplated. Only the subvention of the French Government would have enabled the lessee to make this arrangement. The withdrawal of the annual grant had been threatened, but this would indeed have been a strange departure from the imperial system of fostering art; and it was not persisted in. Delle-Sedie was a great success; and so ought the sisters Marchisio, whether they were or no. I heard them sing the 'Stabat Mater' the other night, beautifully, even wonderfully. It was a performance which M. Bagier very generously gave at the Opera House for a charitable object; the prices were materially raised, and when I went to buy my ticket there was no chance of a place after me, for I took the only one ticket left unsold.

At the Opera Comique they played for a long time on alternate nights 'Le Domino Noir' and Zampa. Since then the management have brought out M. Maillart's 'Lara,' the libretto to which has certainly mangled Lord Byron's poem. But 'Lara' is a great success: they are playing it night after night, and will long continue to do so. The music is very pretty, and is to be found in all the music shops.

But it is time we should say something of the Salon, which is now annual. It appears tolerably clear that the crowds who used to assemble in the Palais de l'Industrie have suffered a material diminution, and also that there has been a general falling-off in the scale of excellence. There are some three or four thousand objects of art, which have been criticized at great detail and with great ability by the Parisian journals; by none better, I suppose, than by M. About, in the 'Petit Journal,' which the 'Moniteur

du Soir' has vainly attempted to swamp. It was first opened on Sunday, the 1st of May, gratuitously, to many thousands who had first duly admired the new equestrian statues of Francis I. and Napoleon I. before the doors. The jury could not decide on any single picture to which to assign the medal of honour, although most critics would give their votes to M. Moreau. The medal of sculpture was awarded to a figure of Mercury by M. Brien, who died this year. But then the statues are very few, and are generally spoilt by being posed theatrically. The fighting Roman bulls vividly recall the Campagna; William the Conqueror is finely done; there are one or two Cæsars—I suppose, in compliment to the Emperor's work. But the statuary is sparse; and those who come to criticize and admire are not many. It will be seen that I am lingering about in the garden before I ascend the staircase and offer you any remarks on the pictures. Two thousand years have brought us no nearer to the fragments of the Parthenon.

But at this point you must permit me one or two observations, in which I will try to be neither long nor dull, on the present condition of French art, and some ethical considerations which it suggests. In France art is prosperous and literature is poor. Artists win a splendid position and make large gains in Paris. There is an immense demand for pictures, not, indeed, by the old families or the landed gentry, but by that enormous monied class who are identified with the material prosperity of the Empire. Artists produce rapidly and cleverly to satisfy the demand; but without much originality, or independence, or conscientiousness. With some notable exceptions, we have little historical painting, and not much of the genuine comedy of manners. Where a painting has been successful, the tradesmanlike element steps in, and we have multitudes of feeble productions, which are only imitations of imitations. It is the opinion of such a critic as M. du Camp, in the 'Revue des Deux Mondes,' of French art, 'C'est simplement l'expression plastique des mœurs de notre époque dans ce qu'elles ont de plus frivole, c'est-à-dire dans le mode.' Let me say that decolleté art has never reached such a height as at the present season; and if this is a faithful reflex of Parisian manners, and the supply is only in accordance with the demand, then Paris suggests a disagreeable parallel with Sodom and Pompeii.

Every one comments on the nudities and indecencies—Leda and swan, harem scenes, Delilahs, bathers by moonlight, Bacchantes, *et hoc genus omne*—mere physical nature, the voluptuousness of Titian without his genius. If this is the kind of high art into which Imperialism has educated the French, we are indeed coming to the days of the Lower Empire. But this is a day of dwarfed natures and little minds, of incessant intellectual activity and little intellectual excellence. Religion is abandoned to priests, women, and children; and there are few aspirations beyond wealth, and sensual pleasure, and military glory to satisfy national vanity. As it is with art so it is with literature. Few works appear to me to have much chance of success unless they are based upon infidelity or immorality. Look at the cheap issue of M. Renan's notorious work, which has gone through as many editions as the larger volume. The other day a worthless book, 'Mémoires d'une Femme de Chambre,' was published, and edition after edition came out in the course of a few weeks, on account of its disclosures, real or pretended, of the system of the demi-monde. A work of real value, such as H. Taine's 'History of English Literature,' would, I suspect, be very slow in achieving any such substantial success.

Paris is now the grand Place de Carrousel of Europe. The constant influx from all parts of the world keeps the beautiful city busy and rich; but this is not the highest sort of destiny for the metropolis of civilization. The people only require *panem et Circenses*, and they get both in abundance. In the grim distance, and not too much displayed, are the Prætorian cohorts.

My notes on the Salon must be very few. There are not many war-pictures: 'L'Empereur à Solferino' is the best; on small canvas, ordered by the Emperor himself. The canvas is so small that the portraits, the horses, and the landscape are miracles of minuteness. The portrait of the Emperor amid his staff is considered very good. We have also a 'Magenta,' 'Napoleon I. on the Egyptian Sands,' and other Napoleonic pictures.

My space warns me that I must leave the pictures. Another subject emerges. Chantilly is a most beautiful place, well worthy of a visit, both for its historical associations and its charming scenery. The stables fronting the Grand Stand are of palatial dimensions, with walls of such thickness that chambers might easily be made in them, Lord

Cowley for many years rented the château, but he has recently given it up. The woods and waters of Chantilly may compare with those of Fontainebleau, and in some respects surpass them. Nothing is more delightful than to lounge through the summer days in these forest glades. You pass whole spaces completely carpeted by yellow lilies, and meet lake after lake infinitely larger than the lake with the big fish in front of the palace of Fontainebleau. The traveller between Boulogne and Paris will remember that charming bit of scenery just below the viaduct as you leave Chantilly. There is the château of Queen Blanche fronting the lake, and at the end of the lake only a carriage path separates you from another. The little château itself resembles a tiny cathedral, with its stained glass and carvings and various ornaments; and I saw with regret that it is fast lapsing into a ruinous condition. Surely some slight expenditure might be spared in order to save such a precious little gem of the past. There is an ancient round table in the forest, from which radiate no fewer than twelve forest paths. Famous hunting also is to be found at Chantilly, and travelling down there in the season you are likely enough to have men in scarlet as your companions. Noble trophies are to be found in the country houses; enormous antlers of deer, exciting stories of hunts of the wild boar; and you are told how even wolves have been found in the forest during severe winters. You notice here and elsewhere the decided paucity of noble trees as compared with an English forest landscape. I was told, however, that much of the best timber was felled just before the last revolution in order to reconstruct the château, which had been destroyed at the outbreak of the first revolution. The present building is only a splendid remnant of what the great château once was in the old Condé days. It came into the possession of the Duc d'Aumale by bequest from a collateral relation, and thus escaped the cruel confiscation which befel all other Bourbon property. It had often been in contemplation to rebuild the château, and the timber was actually levelled when the Orleans dynasty suddenly passed away like one of the palaces of oriental tale which rise at the touch of a talisman and vanish in the waving of a wand. The Duc d'Aumale was allowed to sell the property, paying an enormous tax as a sort of *droit de défraction* on the purchase-money, nomi-

nally to Messrs. Coutts and Marjoribanks the bankers, although in reality it is a mystery whether it is really their property or the property of Miss Burdett Coutts, or still the property of the Duc d'Aumale. But the stables, handsomer many times than those of any modern palace, and the armorial archway through which you enter the domain, attest this magnificence, which, so far as human calculation goes, will never return. You remember Madame de Sevigné's story of the cook who committed suicide here because the fish had not arrived in time, and the fish came directly afterwards, and was not too late. After you have left the forest you may spend hours in wandering through the groves and walks, and by the streams and cascades of the grounds. You pass a little bridge over a clear stream, in which you may sometimes see multitudes of fish, and come to a hermitage, a little like the Swiss cottage at Versailles, in which in old days grand peers and peeresses used to play at shepherds and shepherdesses, representing an innocence which I am afraid found little corresponding reality in the world of fact. But this splendid, magnificent, voluptuous, sinful society, which wrought the evils which wrought the revolution, has passed away as completely as one of the pre-Adamite worlds.

Chantilly is the Newmarket of France. There are hundreds of Englishmen there of the true stable type. It is remarkable that Frenchmen, with all their emulation of the English turf and pride in their improving studs, are absolutely dependent on the English for their trainers and riders. 'You see, sir,' said one of the English people to me, 'these French jockeys think they know all about it when they don't know all about it. They get on pretty well for a time, but just let one of them have a tumble and bruise himself a bit, and it's all over with him. You will never persuade him to get on again.' It is a sight worth seeing to go through Mr. Carter's stables and behold the magnificent horses they contain, and the care and science with which they are tended. It is worth while going to the Chantilly races if only to see the blaze of beauty and fashion there present. I had proposed speaking more in detail, but the last turf event throws them into the shade.

It behoves me to speak of the contest for the Grand Prix de Paris. But first let me point out a curious slip on the part of the 'Saturday Review,' This

Monday morning, the day after the race, I have just taken up the number for June 4, and my astonishment of the crass ignorance on the part of the sporting reviewer is extreme. The writer in it says: 'If Blair Athol and Fille de l'Air meet for the Grand Prix to-morrow at Chantilly, it is certain that the winner of the Oaks will make the winner of the Derby gallop. If Blair Athol runs at Chantilly he will know his business better than he did at Epsom. Supposing that both colt and filly do their best, Chantilly is likely to behold a contest which will not easily be forgotten.' Let me inform the clever scribe and 'prophet,' whose considerable literary ability hides, as is often the case, essential ignorance, that Chantilly was perfectly quiet and unmoved, and that the race for the Grand Prix de Paris does not come off there, but in the Bois de Boulogne. I do not profess to explain the fact, but simply mention it, that before the race a rumour was rife that Blair Athol was not to run to win. This rumour curiously corresponds with the rumour at Newmarket respecting Fille de l'Air; but I certainly believe that there is no substantial basis for either rumour. It is hard to imagine that there was any consideration which would induce the relinquishment of so splendid an attainment. The favourites were Fille de l'Air and Blair Athol, but with the majority of knowing Frenchmen the chance of Blair Athol was considered by far the best. Late on Saturday evening I drove past the course, the stillness and repose contrasting strangely with the mighty muster of the morrow; a site so familiar to all who haunt the Bois, near the Seine at Suresnes, and the cascade, and the windmill, and the château. Excitement was rife very early in the morning, and even the English churches showed some diminution in their numbers. The field of horses was small. It was felt that there could be no equality among the competitors. Various had struck and paid forfeit. The French horse that had won both the French and English Oaks, and the north-country horse that had won the Derby, might be pretty evenly matched; but it was not even conjectured that in so narrow a field a winner could be found over these. Bois Roussel had done well at Chantilly, and there was some languid expectations respecting him. But no one seems to have thought seriously of M. Delamarre's other horse. It was whispered, however, that Bois Roussel

had had a stable companion, Vermouth, the property of the same owner, and that in a trial Bois Roussel had been distanced by Vermouth. This rumour, only one of various rumours, did not take root. The time of the race came on; first, there were the runs for the prizes d'Armenouville, des Pavillons, and Vista Allegra. Then came the great event of the day, the Grand Prix: 100,000 francs, given by the city of Paris and the railways, a work of art, presented by the Emperor, with 126 subscribers; the entry 1000 frs. A capital start, and Vermouth took the lead: the two favourites came last. Along the road the five horses ran in a string, with an interval of a length between each. On topping the hill, Fille de l'Air took the lead, and Blair Athol was in the rear with Bois Roussel. As the horses came down the incline, they were lost to sight for most of the spectators, but on emerging at the corner Vermouth had regained the lead, and the two favourites were running abreast of his saddle. And now the jockeys of these two took vehemently to their whips, but Vermouth wanting neither whip nor spur, maintained his advance and increased it at every stride. He won with two clear lengths, Blair Athol coming in second, a length in advance of Fille de l'Air. As the jockey of Fille de l'Air had not returned to scale he was distanced, and the third money awarded to Bois Roussel.

And now commenced a scene which strongly manifested the fervour of the Gallic nature. The patriotic feeling and the racing feeling combined excited natural ecstasies of triumph and rejoicing. The scene was one never to be forgotten. One hundred thousand people joined in exultant acclaim with electrifying effect. Men embraced and shook hands, and a quarter of an hour elapsed before the reverberating cheers had their last diapason. Owing to the throng it was with difficulty that an opening could be made for the horses to return. As the victor was walking past the Imperial Pavilion, the Emperor himself uncovered. The Emperor sent for M. Delamarre and congratulated him warmly on his victory. For a short time, indeed, M. Delamarre must have been as conspicuous

a personage as the Emperor. The Empress and the ladies of her court were present and 'rained down influence.' Mdlle. Isabelle appeared in a new costume of the victor's colours. The imperial prize of a silver vase was brought forward and exhibited to the spectators. And then loud and long rolled backwards to Paris through the Champs Elysées the broad stream of carriages. That night little else was talked about; and the betting club-rooms and some of the cafés on the Boulevards were illuminated in honour of the victory so gallantly and deservedly obtained, and which Englishmen will not grudge.

I must leave a whole budget unexhausted. I have only a little plot of ground and must turn it to the best advantage. I had intended to speak more at large on the pictures, on the operas, and on the dramas. I had especially made some notes on the varying fortunes of that most comfortable of Parisian theatres, the Théâtre Lyrique; but as my remarks would chiefly have related to the new operas which have been brought out, and which have been either comparative or superlative failures, you will not regret them. I hope 'La Reine Topaze,' in which Madame Carvalho is great, will make amends. The greatest dramatic triumph of the season has unquestionably been at the Odeon with George Sand's 'Marquis de Villemar.' The playhouse had been besieged from nine o'clock in the morning till night-fall, and the Quartier Latin, hearing that a clique was trying to put it down, determined to crush and triumph over that clique, and did so. And then there was the play, half-failure, which has earned Dumas fils the title of 'L'Ami des Femmes,' but of which Dumas père told Dumas fils that he did not think much of it. The Japanese ambassadors are an exhaustless theme for canards; but a friend of mine actually saw them take ice; they wrapped the ice up in little bits of paper and slipped it into their sleeves. But I have said my say. It is the sixth of June. The race for the Prix de Paris is over, and 'Le Sport' says that event definitely marks the close of the season. *Vale. Jubeo te valere.*

SOCIETY GONE TO THE DOGS.

'AND what is going on in society?' said pretty cousin Edith, laying the tips of three bewitching fingers on my hand (there was really no occasion for this proceeding of Edith's, but she was fresh from the sunny slopes of Wiltshire and saw no harm in it), and producing an immediate effect upon me only to be compared to an electric shock with the sting taken out.

'Alas!' I said, 'society has gone to the dogs.'

'Dear me! how very shocking!' she said.

'Shocking, but true,' I replied, giving the fingers of the dear unsuspecting thing just the faintest idea of a pinch. 'Even England's Hope, that is hope number one, for, as you may perhaps have heard by this time, in Wilts, there is a hope number two, but it is a very small one at present—not much to speak of—quite incapable of going anywhere away from nurse; but its papa, who is hope number one, has absolutely gone, as I said before, to the dogs.'

Edith admitted that she had heard of hope number two, and then declared she would go back again into the country where 'people talked sense,' and I said, 'Indeed!' and then she turned her mild eyes (blue as forget-me-nots) upon me with a reproach that, taken in conjunction with the removal of the finger-tips mentioned above, was more than I could stand. So I made 'a clean breast' of it at once.

'You must not take London conversation figuratively, Edith,' I said. 'The talk of good society is absurdly literal, it seldom rises to metaphor; it scorns simile, and despises colloquialisms. I didn't mean to say that society had "gone to the dogs" according to the homely country notion, though, by the way, society does "go the pace"; or that it had gone to reside in Bohemia. House property in Belgravia was never more remunerative than at present, and the elbows of the coat of society are, I am in a position to state from personal observation, in the most

undeniable state of preservation, as you will readily admit if you put on your bonnet, though it will be a shame to hide one silken thread of that curly flaxen hair, and, come with me to Islington.'

A little laugh (sweet as the song of a 'hidden brook in the leafy month of June') at her own ingenuousness, a little threat concerning any repetition of 'flattery,' a promise to be 'back in a minute,' and Edith was gone. At the end of a lady's bonnet-putting-on minute she returned. My second cigar was nearly consumed by that time; but perhaps they were of an extraordinary character, and burned faster than usual; anyway I only lifted my eyebrows and said, 'So soon?' and then we went to Islington.

Bow wow! whoo whoo! What a mighty chorus of dogs! A multitude of voices greeted our entrance, and continued to perform with unabated vigour during the entire time of our stay, though, as Edith said, we should really have been willing to grant the customary interval of ten minutes or even a little longer. But there was no cessation. Variety there certainly was, for the voices ranged from a feeble falsetto up to a deep bass, and comprised many tones which refused to be classified at all. There was my lady's petted poodle, my lord's bloodhound and mastiff, the sportsman's setter, the huntsman's pack (making real music most pleasantly suggestive of Melton on a good scent day), the costermonger's bull-dog—indeed what variety of dog was there not? I should like to be able to answer that question by saying 'mongrel,' but truth forbids. Curs were, in fact, discernible there; and they were most industriously whining out their grievances according to their natures, instead of 'coming out strong under unfavourable circumstances,' as nobler animals did.

'Where shall we begin?' Edith asked; and it was rather perplexing all those rows and rows of dogs; but very fortunately—and I mention it

as a commendable circumstance—the catalogue was evidently drawn up for the purpose of assisting the visitor. I could name some catalogues which were evidently compiled with a view to driving people, who persevered in their endeavours to understand them, mad.

‘Well, Edith, we will begin at No. 1. Class 1.—Greyhounds.’

‘Oh! but I am so anxious to see Aunt Mary’s poodle. Do find it me in the catalogue. Perhaps it’s got a prize.’

The case of Edith seemed the case of everybody else, they all had a dog to recognize, and acknowledge them with such demonstrations of delight as would be most gratifying, if it were not for the reflection that the joy makes a proportionate increase for the number of kicks inflicted on the faithful creatures. Aunt Mary very fortunately had a surname, by means of which I was enabled to discover the locality of ‘The Beauty,’ and led Edith thither. The poor little doggy was snubbed. He hadn’t a word of commendation, and, though I did not consider the fact worth mentioning to Edith, he didn’t deserve one. His was not a solitary case. He looked quite tired of his position. Translating his actions into words, this is what I made of the reception of Edith by the ‘Beauty.’ (Why does every lady who possesses a pet dog of less attractive appearance than usual, insist upon calling it ‘Beauty?’ Does she believe that it is only necessary to call a peony a rose for a season or two to fill the leaves with perfume?) ‘Why am I shut up?’ the Beauty seemed to say; ‘but oh, I’m so delighted to see you. Do take me away. *What! leave me here!*’ and then he cast a rueful look, as if his faith in Ultimate Good had suddenly and ruthlessly been swept away, and with a low whine he lay down and buried his head in straw. Your dog plebeian has as keen feelings as your dog patrician.

‘See,’ said Edith, ‘how that pretty creature is caressing the gentleman. Let us go and see him.’

‘Edith,’ I said, ‘you know who it is?’

‘No, I don’t,’ she said; ‘but I like him because he seems so fond

of his pretty creature. I think, too, I have seen his face—why, it’s the Prince!’ This last in a whisper. ‘Why didn’t you tell me?’

And sure enough it was the future king, and the ‘pretty creature’ was his bloodhound ‘Vulcan,’ in a state of frantic delight, paying honest homage to his royal master.

The Prince set the people a good example. He began with No. 1, and went to No. 1057, which was the highest number in the catalogue this year. Last summer there was nearly double that number, and the excess consisted almost entirely of mongrels—or at best of half-bred dogs. May I not hope the animadversions made at that time in these pages had a wholesome influence in working this change, in saving many dogs from the infliction of being stared out of countenance by a British public, and the British public from the pain of seeing them confined without any ostensible cause beyond the vanity of their owners, and the bewilderment of those who want to study the points of a pure-bred animal. The vanity, of course, proceeds from a most laudable affection for the dog—an affection which leads the owner to see merits through a double magnifying glass, and display a complete blindness as to the defects. Any one entering a dog for show, should be sure that it has some good points, for they are condemning it to a week of punishment; and though the arrangements this year were immeasurably superior to those of last, though happily for both visitors and dogs the ventilation was excellent, though water was plentiful and room tolerably abundant, still the dogs were chained up in close proximity to each other, and they had an interrupted view (except the bulldogs) of their rivals, and they showed their teeth in a most sanguinary manner, and altogether, though the show was really very useful and good, one could not but feel a little sympathy for the suffering brutes during their week of confinement under protest, snarling, snapping, and moaning according to their individual dispositions.

The only thing that can justify a dog show is the improvement of the common stock which is likely to result from a dissemination of knowledge on the subject. Looked at from this point, the shows at Cremorne and Islington are doing excellent service. Competent judges select the three best animals in each class, and over their numbers are affixed labels imparting the fact that they are first, second, or third in point of merit. Every lover of a dog may discern the difference between the thorough and the half-bred animal. To sportsmen, the lovers of coursing, hunting, and shooting, these shows are invaluable. During two visits to the Agricultural Hall, I was much struck by the greater knowledge displayed by the visitors this year than last. That indiscriminate praise accorded to shiny coats was chiefly confined to the ladies, and at every few yards one came upon a gentleman expatiating upon the points by which excellence of breed is clearly established.

The Newfoundland class afforded a striking example of this. His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales took the first prize (one of several others which his beautiful animals won), and really exhibited the solitary specimen of a pure Newfoundland. 'Cabot' was presented to him at St. John's, and those who care to know, may learn from a glance at his head and build, that the animals as large as donkeys are anything but pure Newfoundlands. Cabot has a small, well-defined head, hair black as jet, and glossy as silk. He looks good-tempered, but I am sadly afraid his looks flatter him, for I hear that he has made his teeth felt more than once since he came over the sea.

Dogs do not make a good exhibition. Society goes to see them, but invariably comes away with that opinion, and a headache into the bargain. During the early days they are horribly noisy, during the later ones they are shockingly taciturn, and the very dog you want to see on his legs will persist in lying down in a sulk. In the field, on the road, in the long day's walk, in the half-hour

of garden leisure, they are the charming companions, then you see their grace and agility; but in the crowded show they snarl, they want to climb over benches, they tug at their chains, as the poor little sparrow with its leg in a string flies a little way, hoping each time that it is real liberty, and finding the tug that brings a dead check a moment after. They object to being patted on the head, and do not appreciate the honour of a prize. Mr. Newton's Ranger, over whose beautiful head hung a long list of prizes, appeared to have yielded himself up to a fate experience had taught him not to resist. But for the prizes he evidently did not care. Why the judges didn't give him one this time I can't tell. Perhaps Ranger knew they had neglected him and was determined to resent it. He refused to get up for coaxing, and sterner measures were unavailing for more than a minute.

Can the ladies have forgotten that 'Dogs delight to bark and bite'? It would really seem so, for they will touch, despite the words of warning printed in big capitals.

'Oh, what a noble creature!' I heard a lady say, 'and he has killed two wolves—I must pat him;' and forthwith a delicately-gloved hand stroked the head of Miss Palmer's Hector.

Another was in evident distress because a well-educated bloodhound refused a piece of biscuit. To be sure it was evidently bad taste, for the lady was undeniably fair.

A poodle in a glass case, with a woolly coat of such extraordinary growth, that no idea could be formed of her shape, occupied the most prominent place in the great hall, and held a levee all day long, and ought to have been in an ecstatic state of delight, but she wasn't; far from it, indeed, she seemed to be; and though I heard her called a 'love of a dog,' and 'a sweet pretty creature,' five times in as many minutes, she preserved a stolid indifference. The Prince was so much struck with the appearance of this really beautifully specimen, that he had it out and trotted it up and down the hall for several

minutes with evident satisfaction. 'Nelly' appeared to appreciate this run, and shook out her glossy silken coat, and altogether behaved herself as the queen of toy dogs ought to do in such illustrious company.

In the gallery, where a most excellent assortment of toy dogs was displayed, there was an unceasing murmur of admiration going on. Adjectives that filled the hearts of gentlemen with envy flowed down in copious streams.

'Oh, what a duck!' and 'I could put him in my pocket,' were the stock observations of the day. Ladies told another tale when they came to the corner where the bull-dogs were. Even Edith, who is a bold girl, didn't like them.

'Oh, do come away!' she said; 'his chain might break, and I am sure he would fly at your neck!' and at the words a bull-dog, with an under jaw overlapping his upper one in the most villanous way, licked his protruding teeth as if in actual enjoyment of the banquet that filled Edith with horror. On the fashionable days this corner was quite neglected; but an appreciative shilling audience avenged the insult by blocking up the passage, and gazing with admiring eyes upon the garroters and burglars of canine society.

Ponto, Nero, and Carlo, which make in the feminine Fan, Vic, and Lady, may be said to be the Brown, Jones, and Robinson of the canine family. It is among the dogs plebeian we have to look for these; but even here the universal distaste prevails, and there being no law to prevent a man calling his dog what he likes, we get a most charming nomenclature, embracing the names of venerable statesmen, warriors, actresses, poets, characters in novels, flowers, trees, birds, and heroes of heathen mythology. Of late years there has been a large run on Ethel, an enormous one on Topsy, Daisy, and Minnie, and Madame Blondins are numerous. Two years hence, take my word for it, the catalogue

will be overrun with Alexandras and Garibaldis. I had just made these sage reflections to my fair companion, when she drew my attention to the fact that everybody had gone away: of course they had. From the dogs to the horses is the most natural of transitions, and people had gone to see Fille de l'Air win the Oaks.

'We will go,' I said.

'But I must look at that Flora, and those ever-so-little ones again!' Flora was a Materfamilias with a family that hoped to see some day.

'I'll tell you what; I do wish I could buy you that noble creature,' Edith said, pointing to a bold bloodhound I had greatly admired. 'It is for sale.'

'Don't think of such a thing,' I said, 'for that dog has a spirit that would require much whip, and I couldn't "lift my hand, save in the way of kindness," to anything you bought me.'

'Don't be a simpleton, sir,' she said, as we left the great hall, and the barking, howling, dogs to complain almost to vacancy.

Altogether the second show of dogs is a great improvement on the former; but much as the number of animals exhibited has been reduced, it would profit by a still further reduction, unless more dogs that approximate to a pure breed can be found. There is very much yet to be effected in the breeding of dogs. It is by the aid of these shows that it can alone be accomplished. If they do their work well, a day will come when bad dogs will be in a minority. One word as to the awards. Some of them have given great dissatisfaction. It would be too much to expect that all people should be pleased, but the time given is scarcely sufficient for the work, and if the plan adopted in the mastiff class this year of stating the points by which the judges are swayed is in future applied to all classes, it will do much to forward the great end of canine exhibitions.

J. D. C.

YOUNG OXFORD AT THE COMMEMORATION.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'VERDANT GREEN.'



THE poet Gay once contemptuously designated his own University as a 'joy of wild asses;' and it is highly probable that, to a certain class, who, like Emerson, merely regard Oxford as 'a Greek factory,' a leading and popular portion of the proceedings at the Commemoration would seem to them to be distinguished by the characteristics so incisively denoted in the poet's sneer. For, certainly, the Commemoration is a time for wild misrule and a general kicking up of heels. It permits Young Oxford to break through the bounds of discipline, and to enjoy himself after his own peculiar fashion, and yet with a certain resemblance to those classical celebrations when the slaves were permitted to make sport of their masters.

Indeed, the ancient licence permitted by the governors to the governed was more closely copied two centuries ago than it is at the present day. The laxity of manners and morals that then prevailed permitted Young Oxford to assail the reigning dons with a breadth of abuse and a pungency of personal invective that could not be surpassed by the modern cabdriver or fish-fag. Classical quotations, so far from taking the sting out of the satire of these Oxford Juvenals and juveniles were freely employed to wing their shafts more surely home; and it was but a sorry

consolation to the writhing victim to reflect that the vehicle that caused his smart had been levelled at him in the form of a dead language. Thus, when one of the 'academical pickle-herrings' (as Young Oxford, at the Commemoration of a century and a half ago was called by Nicolas Amhurst) shook a dice-box in the theatre, and called out to the learned President of St. John's, '*Jacta est alea, doctor!* seven's the main!' this open allusion to the president's alleged practices was not a whit softened by being partially made in the Latin tongue.

But the institution of the *Terræ Filius* could not be tolerated in these days; and Young Oxford became all the more decent and respectable when the Commemoration was cleansed of such a vehicle of scurrilous personalities and libidinous jests. Let any one turn to Antony à Wood's memoirs and anecdotes of the *Terræ Filius* from 1591 to 1726, and he will be astonished to read of the things that could be said and done in a public assembly wherein was represented the chief learning of the land, and which was composed of persons the larger half of whom had either taken, or were about to take holy orders. More than one *Terræ Filius* so far exceeded the very wide limits of his licence that he was expelled from the University for his coarse satire. Others

had to recant, and to witness their libellous performances burnt, by order of Convocation, by the hands of the common bedell in the theatre yard. This happened no further back than 1713; and even the witty South was less witty but far more coarse than usual when he delivered his *Terræ Filius* speech, as may be seen by the copy of it in the Bodleian. To such a depth of degradation had these Commemoration libels reached since their origin at the time of the Reformation, when they were designed as the vehicles of lively pasquinades against Romish errors! The commencement of the last century saw their downfall.* and Nicolas Amhurst, expelled from St. John's, was compelled to publish his *Terræ Filius* in the form of essays, issued weekly, during the year 1721. In the first of these he says: 'It has till of late been a custom, from time immemorial, for one of our family to mount the rostrum at Oxford at certain seasons and divert an innumerable crowd of spectators, who flock'd thither to hear him from all parts, with a merry oration in the fescennine manner, interspersed with secret history, raillery, and sarcasm; as the occasions of the times supply'd him with matter. . . . Something like this jovial solemnity were the famous saturnalian feasts among the Romans, at which every scullion and skipkennel had liberty to tell his master his own, as the English mobility emphatically style it.' And from the specimens given by the writer of the 'jests' uttered by Young Oxford on these occasions, it is not to be wondered at that the *Terræ Filius* should have been expelled from the theatre and driven to his native kennel.

Although it is to Old Oxford that must be assigned the foundation and continued existence of the Commemoration, yet it is to the presence and support of Young Oxford that nearly everything must be attributed that makes the vitality of the Commemoration so enjoyable. He it is who crowns its bowl of formal every-day milk with the richest of social cream, and varies its solid magnams of port and claret with the lighter artillery of that mental and

corporeal champagne which so pleasantly evidences itself in gushes of sparkling fun, bright bubbles of wit and humour, 'jest and youthful jollity, quips and cranks,' enjoyable luncheons, dinners, boat-races, flower-shows, concerts, balls, and flirtations. Old Oxford, as he confers his degrees, and attires himself in his gorgeous robes of crimson and scarlet and gold, may possibly consider himself as an adjunct to the Commemoration that is not only useful, but ornamental also; yet what would he be without the aid of Young Oxford to give *glad* to his proceedings? It is true that Young Oxford, except when dressed for the river in those brilliant-hued caps and shirts that mark the prevailing boating fashions, can only be considered ornamental so far as Nature has made him, and cannot depend for his personal attractions upon any of those outward adornments with which his University has for so long literally tired the undergraduate. Yet, although there may be some question as to the ornamental character of Young Oxford, so long as he is presented to the female eye at Commemoration in his battered mortar-board cap and tattered scanty back covering, which the fair sex could not recognize under the name of gown; and although in these matters of externals, to which the ruthless statute *De Vestitu* has condemned him, he must, of necessity, yield the palm to even a Doctor of Music; yet of his use, if not of his beauty, during the Commemoration week, there is not room for the slightest doubt.

Who but Young Oxford could draw to his Alma Mater that bright bevy of fair damsels and gentle dames, whom even the gorgeous Dons and Doctors of Music must admit to be the chiefest ornaments and crowning grace of the festival? Filial affection might, perhaps, in rare instances, be so highly cultivated as to afford, of itself, a sufficient inducement to sweet nineteen to journey from her country mansion or rectory to the interior of the Sheldonian Theatre at Oxford, and when there, and beholding the annual ceremony of the Encenia or Commemoration of Founders and Benefactors, to feel herself amply rewarded if only she be enabled to pick out the paternal pate from the mushroom bed of bald heads among the M.A.'s packed beneath her in the theatre pit. Such cases as these may occasionally occur, in which the personal interest felt in some solitary specimen of Old Oxford may carry to the ladies' gallery—in company with the proctorial prudes and decanal dowagers—the 'bright girl-

* This happened some few years prior to 1713, as would appear from the pamphlet entitled 'The Speech that was intended to have been spoken by the *Terræ Filius* in the Theatre at O—d, July 13, 1713, had not his mouth been stopp'd by the V. Ch—r.' This pamphlet was publicly burnt by the Bedell in the Theatre yard, Oct. 3, 1713, as appears from a manuscript left by Dr. Rawlinson.

graduates with their golden hair.' But in the majority of instances, although the fact may be felt and realized, rather than admitted or expressed, are not the youthful specimens in the school of arts in the gallery above regarded with far greater enthusiasm than the specimens of the old masters in the pit below? Old Oxford is completely beaten here, and in the race for popularity—more especially for the maiden stakes—Young Oxford wins easily.

And when the motive power has been supplied by Young Oxford for introducing the young country belle to his beautiful Alma Mater, and when, in student slang, 'peck and perch' are required for the fair birds of paradise in the City of Colleges, who but Young Oxford can best manage this for his sisters and cousins, and, haply, some sister's or cousin's particular friend who has special claims on his attention? Who but Young Oxford can search out lodgings suited to the habits and purses of his friends, in the thronged and expensive High, the quieter precincts of Holywell, or the district marked out by St. Giles' and Beaumont Street? Who but Young Oxford can properly exhibit to his country visitors, rapacious in sight-seeing, that celebrated collection of lions of which his University can show so complete a menagerie in her College Halls, Bodleian, Museum, Radcliffe, Taylor Buildings, Martyrs' Memorial, and the street of streets, the unrivalled High? It is true that the country cousins will retain but a very vague remembrance of their Oxford lionizings, and might even lapse into such a state of mental aberration as to confound the aristocratic Christ Church with the Protestant stronghold of Teddy Hall; but, nevertheless, they could not fail to retain an indelible remembrance of the general aspect of the City of Colleges, although their mental vision of it came before them as a chaotic mass of dining-halls, chapels, libraries, gardens, quads, rooms, and butteries, possessing so many features in common, that it was in vain for the fair visitor to the Commemoration to do more than bear away a hazy impression of the whole, notwithstanding the assistance afforded her by Young Oxford, whose predominant idea and article of faith is, that his own peculiar College is the best in the University, though, from adverse circumstances, not quite so high in standing, or in the class list, or on the river, as it ought to be.

And, besides the lionizings and the pleasant loiterings in college rooms and gardens, who but Young Oxford can

further enliven the sterner stuff of the Commemoration, by arranging for the lady visitors those delightful parties, which, whether breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, tea-fights, or suppers, and whether termed cosy, jolly, stunning, or no-end-of-a-spread, according to the number and nature of the feasters, and whether held in town lodgings or college rooms, or even, by express permission, in the college hall—are regarded by the greater portion of the guests as banquets of the gods, and feasts that have a charm beyond all other festivities. Who but Young Oxford can organize and carry to a successful issue those lighter side-dishes of social life that are so acceptable to the lady visitors after the heavier *pièces de résistance* provided in the Commemoration ample bill of fare—the little excursions to Nuneham and Blenheim, the amateur concerts and theatricals, the college balls and suppers, the water-parties, and masonic fêtes? Who, when his lady friends demand to see everything and to miss nothing, in Commemoration week—who but Young Oxford could contrive for them to pass from Bampton lectures and choral services to processions of boats, banquets, balls, concerts, horticultural shows, and all the other sights and doings, with as much ease as a bagman would construe a page of cross-lines in 'Bradshaw'? Who but Young Oxford could do all this, and much besides this, and make the Commemoration to pass off so agreeably—as it always does—to the lady visitors? And Young Oxford is certainly deserving of all the *kudos* that he may receive for his efforts in this direction. What would the balls be without his aid? It is true that Dons do dance, even as elephants will trifle with nuts and oranges; but 'tis not their nature to.' Their normal state is known to be conducive to other than salutory performances; and, although scandalous rumours have sometimes been set afloat, that, on a young lady's card-tablets at a Commemoration ball, undergraduates have been thrown over for tutors and wardens; and that bachelors (in nature, if not of arts) have been obliged to succumb to principals, heads of houses, and more formidable Fellows; yet, after all, youth is youth, and waltzers are waltzers; and the Commemoration balls without their attendant Young Oxford would be very poor affairs indeed.

Then, where would be the boat-races and processions, if it was left to Old Oxford to monopolize the entertainments of the week? Fancy the outrigger eights manned by Dons, with the Vice-

Chancellor for stroke, and a dean for coxswain! Imagine an M.A. or D.D., who has handled an oar in the tubs of other days, and has come up to his old University from his bucolical retirement, grandly adipose, and not yet under Banting's treatment, but desirous to revisit the academic groves of his youth, and to show his daughters or nieces what an Oxford Commemoration is like—imagine, I say, this respectable old gentleman taking a walk by the riverside as far as 'the Willows'; and, looking back to the towers and spires that rise above the dark trees in the Christ Church meadows, and to that 'slow,

broad stream, stirr'd with the languid pulses of the oar,' and looking for the first time on the canoes and outriggers, which an awkward motion or an unchecked sneeze from their occupants would seem sufficient to overturn! Surely he would deem that Young Oxford must either be prone to a suicidal frame of mind, or be as unmindful of a ducking in the Isis as were the Balliol 'torpids' at the Commemoration of '63, when, in endeavouring to salute their Princeps by standing to toss their oars, one man lost his balance, and capsized the crew of nine into the water.* Then, the Show Sunday—how does Young



A WALK TO 'THE WILLOWS.'

Oxford enjoy the crowding and thronging of crinolined women and gowned men in the Broad Walk, under the elm avenue in the Christ Church meadows, and the anything but Sunday talk that goes on until Tom tolls the hour for retiring!

But Young Oxford is seen in his chiefest glory at what is really the Commemoration—the Encœnia, the ceremony within the walls of the Sheldonian Theatre—where, in the presence of the Dons, arrayed in a gorgeous semicircle, the undergraduates, from their upper gallery, look down upon the pit area, upon a throng of masters, between whom and them is a blooming parterre of loveliness and summer dresses, in the Ladies' Gallery; and for whom they

provide an ample fund of amusement by their sayings and doings before and during the conferring of degrees, the delivery of the Creweian oration, and the recitation of the Latin and English essays, the Latin verse, and the Newdegate prize poem. It is not too much to say that, on such an occasion, Young Oxford presents a sight to which none

* This was afterwards said to be a got-up effect. The boat was near to the shore, and its crew coolly *walked* through the water to the bank, as though nothing particular had occurred; while the Princess of Wales, who had shown alarm at the 'accident,' waved her handkerchief in acknowledgment of the cheers that they gave her while they stood in the water.

but himself can be his parallel. With what a tumult of uproarious rejoicing does he besiege the theatre doors in Broad Street, where the heads of the *Cæsars* (facetiously known as the busts of the heads of houses) grimly gaze upon the throng of square caps, fighting and struggling to get an inch nearer to the gates. It happened, on one occasion, that some lady visitors had accidentally mingled with this crowd; and even the chivalry of Young Oxford could not prevent their being sadly crushed. The young ladies screamed; when a gallant proctor appeared within the gates, and called out, 'Can you make a road?' 'Yes,' shouted the square-caps. 'If I open the gates,' said the proctor, 'will you pledge me your honour that you will not come in?' 'Yes,' again shouted the square-caps. The proctor unlocked the gates and threw them open; the undergraduates passed the young ladies safely within the railed enclosure; the proctor locked the gates; and then, but not till then, the undergraduates renewed their struggles to smash the obstacle: whereupon said the observant proctor, 'I glory in being an Oxford proctor; for I have had a proof that Oxford men are men of honour.'

That proctor, an hour afterwards, was doubtless vehemently cheered by the undergraduates within the theatre walls, for he must have been a popular man. But woe unto the proctor's peace of mind and placidity of temper if he has been unpopular! For when Young Oxford has really squeezed himself within those gates, and has been propelled up the dreadful staircase that finally lands him, all tattered and torn and hot and dishevelled, in his own peculiar gallery, and has there settled down in his place, how the pent-up stream of jovial chaff bursts forth with a full flood! Favourites are cheered and foes are hooted; and it will go hard with the examiner or proctor—senior, junior, or pro—who has in any way made himself obnoxious to the occupants of the Undergraduates' Gallery. Plucks and gates and chapels are figuratively flung in their teeth; impositions are now laid on their own shoulders; proctorizings and haulings-up, though long forgotten by them, are now remembered to their confusion; and rash interferences in tandems, drags, grinds, hotel-spreads, towns and gowns, and those other little amusements that sometimes accompany the thorough learning of the ingenious arts—all these things are not suffered to lie any longer in the tomb of the Capulets, but are dragged forth to

serve as fuel for the fire that is to roast the hapless victim.

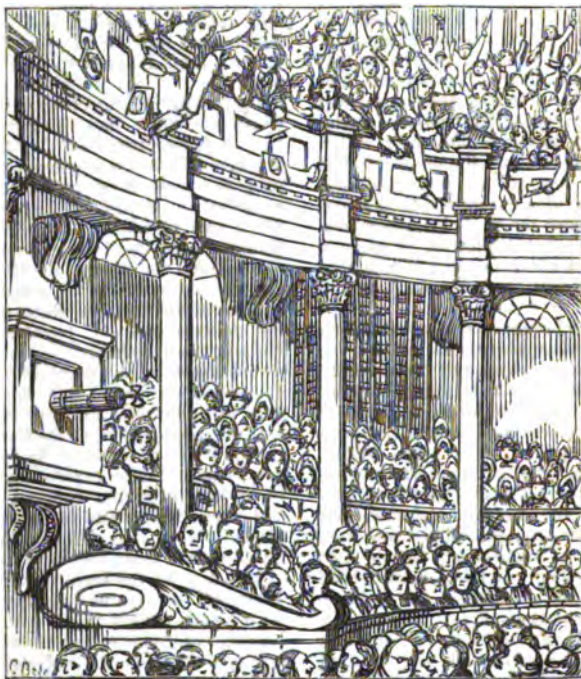
The lungs of the undergraduates are exercised to their fullest extent in cheers, cries, and groans. All the notabilities of the day are mentioned in stentorian terms, and their names honoured with applause or condemned with yells of execration. Royalty, of course, is ever duly honoured in a city where loyalty is a portion of faith, and where the heir of the throne is looked upon as the highest and best specimen of Young Oxford. The Chancellor is pretty sure of a round of hearty cheers, especially if he be the present popular Chancellor, Lord Derby. Political celebrities receive their due meed of attention; and they who heard the thunderous plaudits that greeted Lord Palmerston at the Commemoration of '62 would not question his popularity among a body of muscular Christians, who, like Young Oxford, have a proper reverence for talent and pluck, and who, on the same occasion, paid the same honours for the same cause to the Bayard of British India, Sir James Outram. The Bishop of Oxford's name is always received with cheers; and the other notabilities of the day are variously treated, according to circumstances and the fluctuations of the delicate gale of popular favour. Unhappy individuals in the pit who are distinguished by any peculiarity in their appearance or dress—like the gentleman with the white hat, and the M.A. with the opera-glass, at the Commemoration of '63—are assailed by volleys of groans and frantic expressions of disgust; and even the curators, peelers, and other rhadamanthi of the scene, are greeted with a similar freedom, and with a profusion of gratuitous advice.

But it is to the Ladies' Gallery that Young Oxford returns again and again for a fitting subject for his approbation. No class or group of ladies is left unnoticed. If they are not designated by their dress, they are mentioned by their supposed bondage in Cupid's chains, or their wish to be under love's thralldom. The cries that are proclaimed from the Undergraduates' Gallery include 'the ladies in white,' 'in pink,' 'in mauve,' 'in green,' or any other predominant hues; 'the ladies who are engaged,' 'the ladies who wish to be engaged,' 'the ladies who are in love,' 'the ladies who want to be in love,' 'the ladies in spoon bonnets,' 'the dark girls dressed in blue,' 'the ladies in general,' 'the ladies in particular'—such are the changes that are rung by Young Oxford on this attractive theme; and when, at the Commemoration of '63, thunderous

cheers followed the cry of 'No invidious distinctions!' on some one proposing 'The pretty girls,' Young Oxford testified that he looked upon the occupants of the Ladies' Gallery as a bevy of fair women.

Then, when the procession of the Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor and his pokers has gained a temporary lull in the storm of cheers and cries, who but Young Oxford can so epigrammatically denote the popularity of the individual candidates as they are led forward to receive their honorary degree? Cries of 'Who is he?' 'What has he done?' 'Where did he come from?' 'Take him

back!' cannot be very agreeable to the feelings of a person who has considered himself famous. Who, too, but Young Oxford could have the heart to bully a good-humoured Public Orator, as was done to Mr. Michell, when he delivered the Creweian oration in 1863. 'He's pulling faces at the Chancellor!' 'Shame, shame!' 'The Chancellor's a-laughing at you!' 'What a jolly old lunatic!' 'Oh dear! he's going to faint!' 'Pat him on the back!' 'Give him a glass of water!' 'Oh, he never takes it.' Fancy having to make a speech, and that, too, before the Prince and Princess of Wales, interspersed at every sentence



YOUNG OXFORD (*loquitor*)—'THREE CHEERS FOR THE YOUNG LADIES THAT ARE ENGAGED.'

with such wild chaff as this! and fancy, too, on the same occasion, when Dr. Travers Twiss, introducing the Duke of Newcastle, and describing him as '*reipublicus observantissimus, studiosissimus*,' unfortunately paused a second for breath, and heard that instant filled up from the gallery with the electric joke, '*et Travers Twissimus*.' The Prince of Wales had served his apprenticeship to this, at the Commemoration of '61, when, for the greater portion of the festal week, the weather was so wretched that it might truly be said there was only

the Vice-Chancellor to remind them of *Jeune*;* but to the Princesses who sat by his side, charmingly simple in her white and mauve dress, and radiantly beautiful in her kindly face, the sight must not only have been a wondrous novelty, and a pageant which, according to the testimony of Old Oxford, had not been seen within the walls of the theatre

* Dr. Jeune (now raised to the see of Peterborough) was Vice-Chancellor from 1859 to 1862. It is also noticeable that Dr. Wynter was Vice-Chancellor, 1840-43.

since it was visited, at the Commemoration of 1814, by the Prince Regent and the allied sovereigns; but it must also have furnished (nay, it did,) ample material for amusement and severe trials for her gravity. Especially was this the case when the representative of Young Oxford, whose duty it was to recite the congratulatory poem, broke down at the line, 'The loving trustfulness of those sweet eyes;' at which was raised a shout of laughter, in which the blushing Princess could not but join. 'Oh, bliss without alloy!' continued the reciter, with an unhappy glance at the gods, that drew from them a fresh storm of laughter and cries of 'Ah! ah!'

But Lord Derby's elegant Latinity went far to remove the impression left by the congratulatory verse; and when this illustrious representative of Old Oxford, addressing the royal representative of Young Oxford, spoke in the following terms of his beautiful bride, the blushes of the Princess proved that she comprehended the purport of the cheers that rang through the theatre at the conclusion of the eloquent Chancellor's words. They were these, and could not be surpassed in fine taste and classic oratory by any spoken at the sister University in the recent royal visit thereto, which is elsewhere described in these pages:—

'De Ea quid loquar? Ipsa adest; et in egregia formæ pulchritudine, in benigna dulcium oculorum luce, in fronte illa nobili et pudica, nobis omnibus, qui huc adsumus, innatas virtutes animæ, velut in speculo mirari licet. Ipsa adest; et jam nunc conspectu Tuo fruitor, horum omnium ora vultusque videt, plausus clamoresque audit, et, Ipsa testis, agnoscit quali studio, quanto amore, Te, Conjugem Suum, venerabilis hæc Academia prosequatur. Illam, stirpe Regia ortam, gente amicissima editam, quæcum utinam indies conjunctiora fiant amicitie nostræ vincula, ex quo primum die ora nostras tetigit, non jam ut alienam, sed ut indigenam, non hospitem, sed familiarem, non nurum, sed Filiam dilectissimam suam sibi Patria hæc omnis propriamque vindicat.

'Salvete iterum iterumque ambo
Fellices ter et amplius
"Vos" irrupta "liget" copula; nec malle
Divulsus querimonis
Suprema citius "solvat" amor die.'

In the same speech Lord Derby addressed the Prince of Wales, then endowed with the degree of Doctor in Civil Law, as

'Te vero, Illustrissime Princeps, non modo Hæredem, quum Solii tum Vir-

tutum Illustrium Parentum Tuorum, læti et gratulantes salutamus, sed hujus Universitatis Alumnum; qui hæc intra mœnia per biennii prope spatium bonis artibus diligenter studebas; neque, generosissimus licet et porphyrogenitus, aut illustri genere, aut Solii proximitate, turpem desidiam aut offensam licentiam prætegebas, sed Te in omnibus Universitatis disciplinæ obsequentem et condiscipulis Tuis insigne exemplar præstabas; quippe hand ignarus neminem imperii capacem futurum, nisi qui adolescens auctoritati obtemperare novit; ideoque ii qui Tecum in statu pupillari versabantur

'Sensere quid mens rite, quid indeoles,
Nutrita fastis sub penetralibus,
Posset, quid "Alberti" paternus
In Pueros animus "Britannos."

With such a royal example of Young Oxford at the Commemoration this paper may be brought to an end. A Prince of Wales and his bride can never again be seen by us within the walls of the Sheldonian Theatre; and while the Cambridge Senate House has welcomed them in a manner befitting to themselves and the University, the Oxford Commemoration of 1864 must content itself with paling its lesser fires, and reposing upon the rich sheaf of laurels that it reaped in 1863. Of the present Commemoration it will be sufficient to note, that it was brilliant in its weather, and successful in its details; that of the new D.O.L.'s, Sir Rowland Hill—who is, emphatically, the man of letters of his time—carried off from the men of letters present the largest share of the applause bestowed on that portion of the Encœnia; that the spirited author of the Latin verse had first to ignore the caustic suggestion, 'Won't you try a little action, sir?' and then withstand the piteous appeal, 'Please to wind it up, sir!' that Shakespeare's tercentenary was celebrated in the English verse—the winner of the 'Newdegate,' as he drew breath between his admirably-delivered periods being treated to a mild inquiry, 'Have you lunched, sir?' but afterwards to a rattling round of well-deserved applause; that Old Oxford, in the person of its Vice-Chancellor, somewhat lost its temper at Young Oxford's chaff, by which, in good truth, it was sorely tried; that the tenants of the upper gallery gave salvoes of applause for the Princess of Wales, Lord Derby, Lord Palmerston, Disraeli, Garibaldi, Denmark, and the Confederates, and volleys of hisses for Austria, Prussia, the Federals, the French mare, and even Mr. Gladstone; that the ladies re-

ceived their customary compliments; and that the innovation of 'The ladies with money' was received with a groan of disapprobation that stamped the mercenary proposition as one utterly distasteful to Young Oxford at the Commemoration. More graceful by far—better at once, both in wit and in taste—was the parting salvo from the phalanx of Undergraduates who watched

the last of the ladies leave the semi-circle, and file off through the great door with their grave and learned companions,—'Three cheers for the Area Belles.' With these rounds and a parting bark at the Proctors, given with unusual sharpness and goodwill, closed the Commemoration of 1864 on a day on which grand, grey Old Oxford looked its best under an almost Italian sky.

SOCIETY IN CAMBRIDGE:

The Royal Visit.

CAMBRIDGE is usually a very sedate place. As you walk through its quiet streets, even in term time, you are struck with its aspect of calm repose, peculiar to university towns, and seem to inhale, as it were, an atmosphere of academic freedom and peace which (*pace* Earl Russell) suggests the most perfect state of 'rest-and-be-thankful-dom' you can conceive. In point of external beauty it is by no means so interesting as the sister-university city; its red brick contrasting unfavourably with the venerable white stone whose architectural grandeur renders Oxford as superior to Cambridge as to every other town or city in the kingdom. But if art has thus smiled upon her sister, nature has been unusually bountiful to the ancient home of *Mathesis*. The grounds at the back of the colleges (the 'Backs,' as they are called), with their well-trimmed lawns, their magnificent trees, and the sleepy old Cam wending his dark way among them, give a picturesque loveliness to the University as distinct (if one can so imagine it) from the town, which Oxford in vain sighs for.

'Society' in Cambridge partakes very much of the same character which the place presents. Staid, formal dinner-parties, musical evenings, which, in the language of stage directions, might not inappropriately be termed 'slow musical evenings, and painfully protracted 'perpendiculars,' at which the perpendicular is the only position of the undergraduate 'human form divine' recognized by college etiquette (hence the name)—are the usual forms of gaiety in which the academic world allows itself to indulge. It is seldom that the calm dignity of the university mind is unsettled, or the quiet (perhaps too quiet) routine of university life dis-

turbed by such excitement as the visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales has just caused. About a fortnight before the time fixed for the visit, it became evident that something unusual was about to happen. A stranger entering the town would have been struck with the synchronous development, in every direction, of a taste for external smartness and objectionably odoriferous new paint. Nor would he be long in discovering its cause. He would see in every alternate shop-window certain advantages which The Royal Visit (in large capital letters) enabled the worthy tradesman within (who, like most university tradesmen, is a very honest fellow, and wouldn't on any account charge you more than double its value for anything, unless he thought you would pay his bill without looking into particulars) to 'offer to your notice.' He would, if he looked into the local papers, see the occasion 'improved' by ingenious impostors on public credulity, as thus:—'The Royal Visit! On all festive occasions the Public will find that Holloway's Pills, &c.; or 'Visit of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales!!! One of the chief requisites for real enjoyment during the coming Festivities is Health. Kaye's Worsdell's Pills, &c.

As the looked-for day drew on, he would see the preparations assume a new form, in the unsightly growth of giant wooden stands in every vacant spot past which the procession was to pass; and he would regret, as we did, that the very questionable example set last year by the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's was followed in not a few of our churchyards. The fronts of these timber edifices in time assumed a less hideous aspect by the help of evergreens and flowers, and an unlimited supply of scarlet and white drapery;

and when filled, as they were to overflow on the day of their Royal Highnesses' arrival, by gaily dressed and enthusiastically loyal spectators, who had, many of them, taken their seats at least four hours before the procession was expected, added not inconsiderably to the liveliness and animation of the scene. On the morning of Wednesday, June 1, the whole town seemed to have suddenly broken out into a flag-and-evergreen rash — to have been taken, as it were, with floral measles, which reminded us very much of the sudden eruption of Oxford-blue rosettes after the university boat-race last Easter. 'Gown' and 'Town' had renewed their old rivalry in their efforts to do honour to the royal visitors, and express in unmistakable tones the sincerity of their welcome, and succeeded in making the old town exceedingly gay and pretty.

Wednesday heralded the great event in the arrival of the Chancellor of the University—the Duke of Devonshire; whose coming inaugurated the strictness of academic costume, which to a stranger would be the most striking change of all. Doctors of Divinity, Law, Medicine, assumed their brilliant scarlet gowns; and every member of the University donned white tie and bands, in addition to his usual academic dress.

The Prince and Princess reached Cambridge on Thursday at one o'clock. Their visit being made especially to the University, no part was taken by the town authorities in the reception. The Earl of Hardwicke, as Lord Lieutenant of the county, received their Royal Highnesses at the station, where the University Rifle Corps was in attendance, and did the 'correct thing' in the way of military honours with its 'usual efficiency.' Each member wore a small red and white ribbon as a mark of sympathy and respect to the Princess. At every point of its progress from the station to the old court at Trinity, the royal cortège was greeted by enthusiastic cheers and every possible display of loyalty and admiration; particularly when the procession stopped about half way, and an address was presented to the Prince by the mayor and corporation. The University Volunteers headed the procession, to whom succeeded the mounted escort of the Duke of Manchester's cavalry. Under ordinary circumstances the brilliant uniforms and splendid appointments of this corps would have attracted eager attention, as they certainly gave a very imposing effect to the spectacle; but

all eyes were turned to the royal carriages, and the anxiety to obtain a good view of the beautiful Princess consigned to insignificance the 'Gorging Lord-Mayor's show' of cavalry, as the last creation of Mr. Dickens' brain would say. The procession was closed by the Town Volunteer Corps.

On arriving at Trinity the royal cortège passed in through the 'King's Gateway.' None but crowned heads had ever entered in state through the venerable porch, and it was feared that college etiquette would have set up its back against innovation, even at the expense of spoiling one of the most striking features of the reception. So very conservative (does the word ever mean *pig-headed*?) are we! Fortunately, the authorities had the good taste to waive this point, and the royal carriage entered, took a sweep round the quadrangle to the extreme gratification of many of the fair visitors who would have otherwise been disappointed of a near view of the Prince and Princess, and stopped at the lodge, where the Master of Trinity and Lady Affleck received the royal visitors, and conducted them to the Queen's apartment.

A pavilion had been erected under the shadow of the lodge, and the royal party having presently taken their seats in it, an address was presented to the Prince of Wales by the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor, the Heads of Colleges, &c., in which the University expressed its gratification at the visit of his Royal Highness, 'especially as he was accompanied by the illustrious Princess, his royal consort;' and trusted that they might consider the honour thus conferred upon them as a proof that his Royal Highness cherished a kindly remembrance of the period of his residence in Cambridge, and so on, with a graceful allusion to the Princess. Nothing new or peculiarly original in the address; but it bore the stamp of sincerity; and the Prince was pleased to express his gratified sense of the cordiality of the welcome accorded to the Princess and himself. Their Royal Highnesses then distributed the prizes to the University Volunteers, and the ceremony of reception was over.

By some process we seem to have fostered, until it has grown into a fixed principle, the idea that royalty is equal to any amount of physical exertion; and that to crowd into one day's programme excitement enough for any ordinary week is the orthodox way of celebrating a royal visit. So that, although the Princess had undergone the fatigue of a journey from London,

of a 'triumphal entry' into Cambridge and the perpetual bowing throughout it, which her Royal Highness performs with such peculiar grace and sweetness, but which must require constant and very tiring exertion, three o'clock saw her enter the carriage and drive to the Senate House, amid an outburst of cheering which did credit alike to the loyalty and lungs of the assembled 'Varsity men.

The scene in the Senate House is one we hardly dare attempt to describe. The body of the house is chiefly occupied by ladies, about one-third down the centre being kept for members of the Senate and their gentlemen friends. On the dais at the west end is the Chancellor's throne; and on either side were placed three seats, those on the right for the Prince and Princess and the Duke of Cambridge, those on the left for the Vice-Chancellor, the High Steward, and the Premier. The north and south galleries are exclusively for undergraduates and bachelors, whose privilege it is to wear their caps, while members of the Senate in the body of the house are obliged to uncover. This latter point undergraduates are particularly careful to enforce; and any unfortunate person, either through inadvertence or ignorance of Senate House etiquette and undergraduate rights, venturing to enter with his hat on is at once greeted with shouts of 'Cap!' 'cap!' 'cap!' which *always* have the effect of unroofing him, in spite of the extremest moral courage or obstinacy.

Both galleries were filled long before the hour fixed for their Royal Highnesses to arrive, and the undergraduates amused themselves in their usual fashion. Proceedings on their part were opened by cheers for the ladies generally, succeeded by peculiarly caustic remarks on the capillary attraction of the gentleman down below who would *not* take his hat off. Suggestions were made as to the advisability of 'bonneting' him, if any neighbour would be so obliging; and doubts expressed that his hair was not his own: did the gentleman wear a wig? and if so, had he paid for it? until at last the poor man was obliged to request a neighbour to remove his hat; and the compromise thus effected was greeted by the victors with a round of applause. Then followed more cheers for the ladies 'in blue,' 'in pink,' and then, summarily, 'out of pink;' and these were succeeded, by way of relief, by a roar of groans and hisses for 'Gladstone and Democracy,' Mr. Bright, and Earl Russell. The arrival of the Premier

(of whom the Johnians are so justly proud) was announced from the gallery, and kept the house ringing with cheers for two or three minutes; and it seemed that there was no limit to the power and endurance of undergraduate lungs; for as soon as one set of cheers subsided another theme was started, and execrations of General Butler, hearty cheers for Professor Kingsley, 'the South,' and Lord Derby, followed each other in rapid and almost deafening succession, until the shouts without announced the approach of the Princess. Respectful silence at once ensued, and was maintained until her Highness reached the dais and turned, when immediately there rang out a burst of applause, which fairly eclipsed in intensity and duration any previous effort: her Royal Highness's evident pleasure gave a zest to the cheering, which would have continued in all probability for ten minutes longer, had not the Prince's arrival created a necessity for a second silence. His Royal Highness was almost as warmly greeted as the Princess had been; and the echo of the last cheer for him had hardly died out, when 'Three cheers for the Danes' set hats waving again, and supplied a very fair test of the pulmonary condition of the male part of the assemblage. Austria now came in for no measured expression of dislike and censure; and it then seemed possible that the real business of the congregation would be proceeded with, when another cry, 'Three cheers for the Queen,' followed by 'Three for the King of Denmark,' again scattered all order to the winds, and tried the patience of the Public Orator, who was waiting all this time for a chance of beginning his oration. Quiet being at length gained, more from sheer exhaustion than for any other reason, the Public Orator (the Rev. W. G. Clark), taking the Prince by the right hand, gave a short Latin address; and his Royal Highness was then created a Doctor of Law by the Chancellor. The Duke of Cambridge was next admitted, and the Public Orator then proceeded with his speech. Now speeches—even in English—have a tendency to become tedious, especially to that portion of the 'audience' who are so far from the speaker as to be excluded from the category of *hearers*; and this tendency is somewhat increased when the speech is in Latin, and the greater part of the addressees far too full of *life* and mischievous to listen quietly to a 'discourse' in a *dead* language. Consequently, the Orator was favoured with frequent requests to 'cut it short,' to 'go ahead,'

and so on; which disconcerted him much less than they amused the royal listeners. Those who were near enough to catch all that fell from the Orator, picked up many a crumb of eloquence and wit—reward sufficient for their patient attention. We do not give the speech, partly because it would not be interesting to many of our readers, and—and partly that we are utterly unable to remember more than three consecutive words of the original. Degrees were then conferred on Lord Spencer, Lord Alfred Hervey, Lord Harris, and General Knollys; the Chancellor's medals were presented to the successful candidates; and three prize poems having been recited in what will—not to be hypercritical—call a good monotone, the congregation was dissolved. It was now four o'clock; and the Princess must have been heartily glad to return to Trinity, there to recruit a little before the fatigues of the evening.

At half-past six the royal carriage passed out of Trinity, conveying the Prince and Princess and the 'Royal George' to dine with the Vice-Chancellor, the Master of Peterhouse. They were cheered very warmly at this and every other appearance in public; and if the exertion of acknowledging so much enthusiastic loyalty were trying to their Royal Highnesses, they must at least have been gratified at the display of such real respect and affection.

About nine their Royal Highnesses left Peterhouse with their suite, and attended the A. D. C.* performance, which commenced, as soon as the royal party was seated, with the farce of 'Whitebait at Greenwich.' The piece well deserves to be called a *screaming farce*: it kept the house in a continuous roar of laughter throughout, and at the close was warmly applauded by the Prince and the Duke of Cambridge, equally with the rest of the peculiarly 'select' audience. We thought at its close that the force of comely 'could no further go;' but in the burlesque which followed—Mr. Byron's 'Aladdin, or the Wonderful Scamp'—Mr. Burnand's inimitable acting was equal to anything we have ever seen even on the London boards. Mr. Twiss also deserves special mention.

At the conclusion of the burlesque their Royal Highnesses took their departure for the ball given by the Uni-

* For the benefit of some of our readers we may explain that the A.D.C. is not a military corps. Expand the letters, and they assume the form—'Amateur Dramatic Club.'

versity in the Fitzwilliam Museum. There had been great difference of opinion among the leading members of the Senate as to the propriety of allowing the museum to be used as a 'dancing booth,' and a very clever squib was put out by Professor Selwyn on the subject of the 'hospitium saltatorium'—the Latin rendering of 'ball' in the grace which passed the Senate by a large majority. In the verses an unknown M.A. is represented discussing the propriety and nature of the ball with the Procellarius: 'Who will dance? The reverend doctors, or the masters of arts' or perhaps only the undergraduates?, To which the Vice-Chancellor answers, 'We will *all* dance.'

'Orbis et uxor amans ardet inire choros.'

'Oh,' says the M.A., 'then, what shall we dance? Perhaps a Spanish minuet will be most becoming.'

'No, no,' quoth Mr. Vice-Chancellor, 'that is quite out of date. Such slow dances do not suit the *rapid* young gentlemen of the present day:—

'Hastati potius—Gyrusque et Polka—. . . supremus
Sub matutina luce—Rogerus eque.'

However, the grace, as we have said, passed the Senate, and the ball, in point of brilliancy and numbers, was quite a success. The entrance-hall of the Museum was hung with drapery from the ceiling to the floor (Danish colours, of course), and the corners rounded off with crescents of choice plants, which gave a great charm to the scene. The galleries, the largest of which was set apart for dancing, required no decoration, while the fine pictures with which the walls are hung relieved the monotony of the proceedings, or rather of the absence of any proceedings whatever, until the arrival of the royal guests. The Prince opened the ball with the Duchess of Manchester, the Princess dancing with the Duke of Cambridge. At first the royal party somewhat hid themselves in the room specially set apart for them; but, at the request of the Prince, a space was cleared in the centre of the large gallery, in which their Royal Highnesses danced during the rest of the evening. Yes, the ball *was* a success in point of brilliancy and numbers; but there were drawbacks to any great enjoyment. Two square yards is hardly enough for a set in a quadrille; and it is difficult to waltz with ease or gracefulness when you have to pick your way with such consummate care through a moving sea of lace, tulle, silk, and the framework which supports it all. Their Royal

Highnesses left the ball shortly after two, and the 'general company' soon followed.

Friday's festivities were appropriately commenced with service in the magnificent chapel of King's. The Litany was sung, and an anthem, which—as in our opinion it did but little credit to the taste of the committee extraordinary who chose it—we forbear to mention. From King's the Prince and Princess, and the greater part of the company who had attended the service, proceeded to the Senate-house, to witness the conferring of degrees on those whom it pleased the University especially to honour on this occasion. For nearly two hours the galleries had been filled, and were even more crowded than on the previous day. The usual licence of speech prevailed, and the undergraduates showed no disposition to waive their right to uncap any member of the Senate who dared to resist their power. The Bishop of Oxford and Professor Selwyn were very warmly honoured; and alternate changes of groans and cheers were rung on Earl Russell and Professor Kingsley, Mr. Gladstone and Lord Derby, Mr. Bright and Mr. Disraeli; and then for a second or two the fun flagged, until a witty undergraduate, struck with a very brilliant idea, cried out, 'Three groans for the opposite gallery, and the house rang with shouts of laughter, mingled with groans, hisses, and ironical cheers from the 'opposition.' Perhaps the most unanimous *re-tiling* fell to the lot of Mr. Spurgeon: groan succeeded to groan, like the up-heaving and sinking of the mighty ocean-swell, or the moaning of a conscience stricken congregation in his own Tabernacle.

The arrival of the Prince and Princess was greeted even more warmly than on Thursday, and an equal round of sympathetic cheering succeeded for 'the Danes' and 'the King of Denmark.' The Princess was looking much better, and her bright smile was encouragement enough to the loyal fellows in the galleries to continue their cheers for Denmark and groans for her enemies (among whom Earl Russell was again enumerated) as long as human nature could hold out, and they only stopped when it was found physically impossible to keep up the spirit of the thing. The prize poems were then recited, and we could not help thinking how peculiarly interesting it must have been for their Royal Highnesses to have to listen for a quarter of an hour to the solemn spouting of a *Greek ode*. No doubt the interruptions from the galleries were

cruel to the young orator, contrary to etiquette, and so on; but as they evidently relieved the tedium of the recitation, and amused in some degree the royal visitors, we imagine very few really regretted them.

Next came the conferring of degrees. The applause was deafening for Lord Palmerston, and almost equally loud for Sir E. B. Lytton; while Earl Granville, the Duke of Manchester, Lord Stanhope, Lord Eversley, Lord Leigh, and Sir C. L. Eastlake were presented, with the cheering which usually accompanies such ceremonies. But when the Public Orator took Dean Stanley by the hand a perfect hurricane of cheers and hisses burst forth, and could not be quelled—although Mr. Clark three or four times tried to begin his oration, and the Chancellor himself rose and beckoned with his hand for silence—until the Dean's opponents, wearied out with their efforts to drown the storm of cheers which overtopped their execrations, fairly gave in. The Orator then proceeded to speak of the Dean's chivalrous character, his travels with the Prince, his truth, his moral courage, and concluded:—'*Te igitur, Oxoniensibus tuis invidemus; talis quum sis, noster esto.*' The degree of LL.D. was then conferred on him, and afterwards on Mr. Beresford Hope, Dr. Watson, Professor Hoffmann, and Professor Wheatstone. The congregation was then dissolved; and, as a parting stab at the Dean of Westminster, three feeble cheers were raised for Canon Wordsworth, which were responded to by hisses from the Dean's friends.

At two o'clock the Provost of King's entertained their Royal Highnesses and suite at a *déjeuner* in the college hall; and afterwards conducted them to a marquee on the bank of the river to see the boat-procession. The boats rowed quickly past in the order of their position on the river, and returning, drew up opposite the marquee, forming a raft across the stream. The head boat on the river—Trinity Hall—was very prettily and loyally decorated with red and white peonies; and each had a small Danish flag, about a foot square, waving in the bows. The Lady Margaret Club uniform (red and white; especially attracted the Princess's notice. At a given signal the crews tossed their oars, and rose in a body to give the Prince and Princess as hearty, if not as deafening, a cheer as had ever greeted them. Then they resumed their seats, one at a time, and rowed off, receiving a parting ovation from the remaining crews and the crowds on the bank.

The royal party then went by the

backs of the colleges to the beautiful grounds of St. John's, where the horticultural fête was being held. The Princess, in the most graceful and charming manner, distributed the prizes to the successful students of the School of Art; and an address having, by the Prince's request, been delivered to the students by Sir C. Eastlake, the royal party returned by the Backs into Trinity. In the evening a ball was given in honour of their Royal Highnesses; but, as it was exclusively *Trinity*, we are unable to give any particulars.

Here ended their Royal Highness's visit to the *University*. They remained throughout Saturday morning as guests of the Master of Trinity, and visited some of the spots endeared to the Prince by many a pleasant incident of his college life, and left Cambridge about

three, having first paid a visit to Madingley Hall, the Prince's residence while at the University.

We trust the Prince and Princess will always look back with unmixed gratification to the two days spent at dear old Cambridge. Not a single contretemps occurred to mar even for a moment their pleasure, which must have been enhanced by the right leal and loyal sympathy, respect, and affection felt and shown by every class both in the University and town. Nor will the visit have been without effect if, as it undoubtedly must, it assures the *people* how really their future sovereign is interested in their well-being and well-doing, and thus binds more closely to the crown the esteem and love of thousands of true hearts among us.

C. Y.

THE ORDEAL FOR WIVES.

A Story of London Life.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE MORALS OF MAYFAIR.'

CHAPTER XXIII.

'SITTING OUT.'

'I AM afraid you have forgotten me, Miss Fleming. Your face does not show the faintest sign of awakening recognition.'

Her face was blushing beautifully: Paul thought so as she raised it to him.

'I recognize you perfectly, Mr. Chichester. I heard your name announced, and thought you would come to speak to me—that is, of course, after you had gone to speak to Jane.'

And then she gave him her hand; and felt that she had re-opened the acquaintance with great tact and discretion. It made her feel so thoroughly at her ease to allude to Miss Dashwood at once.

'After I had spoken to Jane, of course,' repeated Paul. 'Jane is looking very well this evening, and dancing with Peel, too,' he added, lowering his voice. 'Poor little Jane! I am glad to see all these reports about Miss Lynes have not had the effect of making her miserable. It must be a horrible blow to

a pretty woman to be rivalled by a plain one.'

'A horrible blow, Mr. Chichester, but not so bad as to be beaten with one's own arms. It would be more bearable to a very lovely person to be outshone by money or rank, or ability, or anything in the world than superior loveliness to her own—I should think so, at least,' she interrupted herself quickly. 'I know nothing at all, practically, of such things.'

'Oh!'

'How do you come to be informed of the reports about Miss Lynes, Mr. Chichester? I should have thought even Bath scandal had not wings sufficiently strong to travel to London.'

'I have several channels of communication with this place,' answered Paul. 'Jane Dashwood writes to me, as you know, and then, a few days ago I was in Bath, myself.'

'A few days ago?—since I have been here?'

'I was in Bath last week. Why do you look surprised?'

'I thought Jane would have mentioned it, that is all. She generally tells me everything that is going on.'

'But Jane did not know it. My comings and goings are very fitful at all times, Miss Fleming, and I have other interests in Bath as well as Miss Dashwood.'

'Indeed. I was not aware of it—' began Esther; then she stopped herself abruptly. All Milly's hints and stories about Paul came suddenly on her recollection, and gave other meaning to the remark, which, for a second, she had foolishly believed contained a half-allusion to herself.

In spite of all her self-command, her eyes rested with visible aversion upon the bouquet of rare flowers that he held in his hand. No doubt these were destined for, or in some way connected with, the same mysterious personage of whom she had already heard so much.

Paul seemed half to guess her thoughts.

'You look disapprovingly at my flowers, Miss Fleming. Are they not good ones? I had hoped you would admire them,' and he held the bouquet out as though he expected her to take it.

But Esther only bent her head down slightly. 'They are beautiful flowers, Mr. Chichester. There cannot be two opinions as to the merits of white camellias and heaths at this season of the year.'

'Then why do you look at them with such undisguised contempt?'

'I never look at flowers with contempt. I am not accustomed to see men carry bouquets, and I think it rather—'

'Pray do not hesitate.'

'Rather effeminate, then, especially for you. Camellias and white heath would suit Mr. Peel better.'

'And you really think that I carry a bunch of flowers for my own gratification, Miss Fleming?'

'You did not give them to Jane just now, when you had an opportunity of doing so. If they are not for her, of course they must be for yourself.'

'I do not see that that is a positive

sequitur. There are other persons in the world besides Jane Dashwood and me.'

'And you bring such flowers as those to a ball with the vague intention of bestowing them on any possibly-interesting people you may meet. You must have a great deal of money to throw away, I should think.'

'I bought these flowers neither for Jane nor for myself,' said Paul, gravely. 'I brought them from town for a person to whom such things give pleasure—a person who never goes to balls, Miss Fleming—and when I reached Bath I found it was too late to send them to their destination to-night. They would have withered by to-morrow, and I brought them here for you. Will you have them?'

Esther hesitated. These flowers, after all, then, were destined for the same hands that had received all Paul's former gifts; and yet—and yet her heart throbbed with a reasonless emotion, wildly akin to joy, as he told her so. The straightforward words, his calm eyes looking so fully into hers, were they not most unlike those of a lover speaking to an indifferent person of the woman that he loved?

The colour fluttered to her face. A strange look, half-curiosity, half-pleasure, stole over Paul's.

'You refuse my gift wholly and without reserve, Miss Fleming?'

'I—I—oh, Mr. Chichester, I am so fond of flowers!' And she took them, and raised them to her face.

No subtle odour in the old home-garden on breathless autumn nights, no fragrance of fresh woods—even wandering in their cool shades with Oliver—had ever smote her sense with keenest delight as did the faint perfume of these few hot-house flowers in the hot atmosphere of Mrs. Strangways' drawing-room. She smelt the jessamine again upon the balcony at Weymouth. She saw the stars shining on her through the soft purple of the night. She looked at the moon which had travelled away so far above the silent sea, and knew that she too had travelled far from the land of childish peace, and was

standing with a wonder, half-pain half-rapture, upon the shore of actual life and actual passion!

'Esther, you lazy creature,' broke in Jane Dashwood's voice close beside her, 'this is the second dance that you and Paul are sitting out together. I really cannot allow such things when you are under my protection. You must get up and dance, merely to save appearances.'

'But, my dear Jane, you know I don't care for dancing.'

'That doesn't matter. If people sit out in Bath they are more talked about than if they dance any number of times together; and it would be too trying to my feelings if Paul was to get himself talked about. Mr. Chichester, will you ask Miss Fleming for this waltz?'

Miss Dashwood was looking wonderfully handsome; her cheeks flushed scarlet, her blue eyes full of light; for she was taking Arthur Peel's arm, and her ears were drinking in all the poison of his most tender whispers. He had duly gone through the ponderous duty of one fast dance with Miss Lynes, and was now contrasting her heavy tread and cumbrous waist with Jane's light little form and graceful supple movements. 'It is like riding a thoroughbred after galloping on a dray-horse, Jenny,' he had whispered to his partner in the first turn of the waltz. No wonder such an exquisite simile had made poor Jane's eyes light up with pleasure, although she knew full well that Arthur had done his best to make Miss Lynes smile upon him during every moment that he had danced with her.

'Mr. Chichester, did you hear my request? Will you ask Miss Fleming for this waltz?'

'I don't know whether Miss Fleming waltzes,' said Paul, looking at Esther. 'If she does, I shall be delighted to become her partner.'

Esther had never danced except with the girls at school, and she had a vague feeling that it would be wrong for her to begin any wider experiences during Oliver's absence.

'You know I don't dance much, Jane. I only learnt six months, and

I am not at all sure of getting well through this awfully quick pace that everyone seems to go at.'

'Then, if you have never waltzed, don't begin now,' said Paul, quickly. 'There are advantages in sitting out quietly, which these people who rush through the night at the rate of a dozen miles an hour cannot at all appreciate.'

Jane Dashwood shrugged her pretty shoulders and then whirled away with Arthur Peel. She knew instinctively, better than Esther did, the meaning that lay in Paul's words, and how soon he and his companion would find that they suited each other. Did the thought give her pain? Not an approach to the anguish which any defalcation, even the slightest, of Arthur's cost her, but some faint pangs notwithstanding. Mock though his allegiance had been, she *had* held sway over Paul Chichester, *had* known him listen for half an evening contentedly to her lively chatter; and there was too much of coquetry engrained among the better qualities of Jane Dashwood's heart for her to look on at the secedance of any one out of her dozen vassals without displeasure.

'You are all taking to the heavy style,' she remarked to Arthur Peel in the next interval of the waltz. 'You to Miss Lynes, Paul to poor Esther. Milly and I will have no chance left, unless we can add a few cubits to our stature, and half a hundred weight or so to our bulk.'

'Poor Esther' looks doosed well,' Mr. Peel remarked. 'I never thought anything of her before, but, by Jove, if she was a little more animated you'd all have to look out, Miss Dashwood. I never saw a finer set head and shoulders in my life, and your friend Paul seems to think so too.'

Now it is quite impossible for me to state with certainty what opinions Mr. Chichester was forming. I may say, however, that he had a tolerably fair opportunity of arriving at the conclusions assigned to him by Arthur Peel. On the plea of gaining greater quiet he had persuaded Miss Fleming to move to a kind of small conservatory, or al-

cove, leading out from the drawing-room, dimly lighted as Mrs. Strangways knew how to light, and where soft-falling crimson velvet draperies showed forth in delicate relief one or two marble statues of rare excellence grouped in the centre.

The dim light, the simple lines of falling drapery suited Esther's style of face admirably, better than all the glare and brilliancy of the ball-room. Paul noted, as he had not done before, the noble contour of cheek and throat, the broad soft brow, the peach-like texture of the clear dark skin; all the charms which in some quiet somewhat severe faces like Esther's, grow stronger with time rather than strike you on the first occasion that you look at them. She had none of Mrs. Strangways' queen-like features and brilliant decided colouring; none of Jane Dashwood's piquant changing graces; but Paul was just beginning to see in her a loveliness greater than either—the loveliness of entire freshness, both body and soul, the loveliness of repose, the loveliness of thought.

You could not think of Mrs. Strangways as she must be in a few years hence without picturing to yourself the wreck of a fair woman, well preserved, doubtless, to the last, but a wreck still. Jane Dashwood owed every one of her attractions to bloom and youth. The little infantine features, the constant smile, the fitting colour, all the seductions of twenty would be insipid, if not actually charmless, in another dozen years at latest.

But you could think of Esther Fleming as beautiful at thirty; beautiful with children growing up round her; beautiful with all her fresh youth and colour faded, and with her dark hair grey. She possessed the essentials of abiding beauty—eyes with love and thought in them, features rather grandly cut than soft or pretty, a complexion of perfect delicacy, but not too bright or fragile to go through the wear and tear of common life.

An unwonted feeling of peace came over Paul Chichester's weary spirit as he looked at her. He had never met any woman before whose beauty

had not in some sort troubled while it charmed him, calling up vain spectres of the youth and passion of which his colourless life was shorn! Esther alone soothed him. As he looked at her involuntarily the painless years of his long-buried youth came before him; involuntarily rose the hope of some nameless peace that the future might hold in store for him. Hope to him, who had so long given over the vaguest shadow of hope! If he analyzed this at all, must it not crumble into ashes in a second, as all other hopes had done?

I suppose just because the emotions they aroused were intangible and vague, faint murmurs of far-off happiness, not any present incarnation of vivid living pleasure, did Esther's face and voice sink quickly into Paul's heart, and he dared surrender himself to the spell without any of the harsh self-warnings with which he ordinarily armed himself against all syren seductions or allurements. He thought, or believed he thought, that he would like to know Esther was engaged; that while she undoubtedly awakened thoughts of quiet love she was not a woman to be himself in love with; that if friendship were ever possible with a girl of eighteen it would be so for Esther Fleming. He thought all this, and looked more closely at Esther Fleming's delicate drooping profile, and long dark lashes, and young round cheek, surrendering himself, I must confess, to the perilous pleasure of this analyzation with such thorough good-will, that before half an hour had past every one in the room was saying how shamefully Jane Dashwood had been thrown over again, and how Mr. Chichester had just made some new girl an offer behind the curtains in the back drawing-room.

'Yes, Miss Fleming, I like to think of you as not waltzing.' They were on the same theme still. Nothing is more significant of on-coming liking than when the most trivial subject takes so long to exhaust. 'There are just one or two people in the world whom one likes to believe unsophisticated and fresh.

Now all freshness must, by the inevitable sequence of natural laws, be gone from any woman who has been pressed and jostled through a few hundred or a few score—yes, or one such crowd as we are looking at now.'

'That is a very sweeping condemnation of yours. All girls dance, except some very few like myself who have been brought up in the wilds of the country all their life.'

'Then those few are the only ones whose hearts can be fresh. There are some feelings as fragile as the flowers all these young ladies wear on their breasts, and which are heated, and withered, and broken by the close pressure of the first waltz. Such flowers don't get fresh again, however pure the air and water may be you give them next day.'

'No, but young ladies are really not as susceptible as flowers, Mr. Chichester. Of course it is very pretty and romantic to think they are; but I should think, in plain truth, most of the girls we see here go through their waltzes and galops without thinking of what they are doing or of their partners either. Waltzing is the business of their life, neither less nor more.'

'Exactly, you could not express their condition more clearly; but how many phases must they have gone through before arriving at a stage in which a score of successive crushes, and a score of successive men to support them through the crushes, awaken no other sensation than that of going about any ordinary business? The flowers don't wither any more because there is no more life in them. Those natural unsubstantial ones that the first ball or two dried up for ever, are replaced by good artificial ones, no longer perfumed or fragile, but showy and well painted, and an excellent imitation of nature, and warranted not to suffer in any way under any circumstances in which they may be placed. Now, my own tastes are singular, perhaps, but I see more beauty in one little tuft of purple thyme from the moors than in all these Paris-made roses and lilies that fill Mrs. Strangways' rooms.'

'So do I, Mr. Chichester; but though I can't argue, I feel what you say about dancing is not quite fair. If I had lived in a town, like the Dashwoods, I should have got to like waltzing from the time I was fourteen, as they have, and yet I don't believe I should have been the whited sepulchre that your nice little metaphor implies. I know I should not,' Miss Fleming added in rather an indignant tone. 'I could join in the dancing this moment, and not be any the worse for it at the end of the evening.'

'Possibly,' said Paul, coolly; 'there are some exceptional natures against which evil glances without wounding, but it is better not to have met the stroke at all. I would like to know through what hands even my tuft of wild thyme had passed before it came into mine.'

Involuntarily Esther looked full round upon him, and in the honest blood that rose up and spoke out of Oliver in her face, there was a confession. Paul read it in that full gaze, in that flush of childish shame, and he read it aright; read it as few men of his age similarly placed would have done.

'And if it was not for me at all, Miss Fleming, if it was kept by the hand that first plucked it, I could find infinitely more refreshment in the one breath I was allowed to have of this piece of wild thyme than in being permitted free possession of any hot-bed flowers here. Look at Mrs. Strangways'—he interrupted himself rather abruptly—'how long, I wonder, is it since her wild thyme days? Had she ever any? It is difficult to think of such a look having ever risen on her face as came up on yours just now, Miss Fleming.'

'I can't conquer my dislike to Mrs. Strangways, though I can give no reason for feeling it,' said Esther, glad to escape to less interesting but more neutral ground again. 'Look at her manner as she stands there looking into Arthur Peel's face, and whispering to him, and making him hold her fan and button her glove for her!'

'Miss Fleming, don't be severe. You don't know all the secret turn-

ings, the miseries, the temptations of Mrs. Strangways' life.

'I should be sorry to know them. I only think of her as Jane Dashwood's associate, and I am quite certain some day she will play Jane false if it is in her power.'

'Their characters are very different ones,' said Paul, coolly. 'Jane has no moral self-possession, no command over either her feelings or her temper. A sudden burst of passion, or a sudden revulsion of repentance, would undo all her strongest resolves in a moment. Mrs. Strangways is unembarrassed by temper in any form. She knows, intuitively, the precise point of strongest resistance in any thing or person that she desires to win, and throws herself upon it without either heat or noise. Her victories are won in her dressing-room, in her own cool brain, before she attempts to win them abroad; and whatever she has set herself resolutely to conquer she conquers. Of course, Jane must lose in any game where they play on different sides. Mrs. Strangways, in addition to her beauty, is a person of a very high and unusual order of ability.'

'Don't ask me to share in your admiration of her, Mr. Chichester. The only favourable thing I can bring myself to say of Mrs. Strangways is that she is beautiful, extremely beautiful, more lovely than anything I ever saw before out of a picture. When I have said so much I must be silent.'

'She is very beautiful,' said Paul, and as he spoke Mrs. Strangways passed before them, and Esther saw that her eyes and Chichester's met. 'Beautiful with that fair luxuriant beauty which, as far as mere physique goes, is always, to me, the highest type of all. I never saw such masses of real golden hair as hers upon any other English woman's head.'

'And what are the mental qualities you think of so high and noble an order, Mr. Chichester?'

'Those we were speaking of just now; her self-reliance, her keen insight, her courage; but I don't think I made use of the words grand or noble, Miss Fleming, did I?'

'I am ignorant of the world,' cried Esther, rather hotly. 'I am accustomed to think of married women as satisfied with their children and homes. It is repugnant to me to see a person of Mrs. Strangways' age as eager and athirst for admiration as a foolish girl of seventeen.'

'And you don't think it possible that you judge her too severely?'

'I think it is very possible, but I know I shall never change in my own opinions.'

'You don't think that strong natural tendencies, that years of bad training, that unbounded temptation, ought to be taken into account when you pass judgment upon such a character as Mrs. Strangways?'

'I want to pass no judgment at all. I know what I shall always continue to think.'

'Miss Fleming, suppose for a moment that Mrs. Strangways had had the good fortune to be a man, how would you judge her then? Her beauty, conquests, the admiration she receives, are the breath of her life to her: all that some other kind of ambition would have been to her peculiar temperament if she had been a man. During the dozen years of her youth this ambition of hers has been fulfilled to the utmost. I suppose scarcely a woman living has been more admired or held more absolute sway over men than Mrs. Strangways. Paris, Vienna, London, even, have successively acknowledged hers as the most beautiful face of its day. Well, at thirty—an age, mind, at which ambition begins to settle into a more fixed passion than in youth—Mrs. Strangways has to renounce all that she has lived for hitherto; to see her victims chained to the cars of younger conquerors; and if she makes a struggle to retain any place whatever in the dominions where she once reigned as queen, to be called as eager and athirst for admiration as a foolish girl of seventeen. Would you pity or condemn a man called upon in the prime of his youth to give up his dearest hope in life as Mrs. Strangways is called upon to give up hers?'

It was a subject which most young ladies in that room could have en-

tered upon with the same zest, and in the same spirit of cool inquiry as inspires the writer of an ordinary analytical French novel; but Esther shrank, with unaccountable shyness, from discussing it with Paul.

'I should never bring you to think as I do, Mr. Chichester. My ideas are too provincial and old-fashioned to be breathed aloud in such an atmosphere as Mrs. Strangeways' drawing-room.'

'Then suppose we go out to the refreshment-room, and argue the subject fairly,' Paul suggested. 'I see Jane Dashwood and Peel are there by themselves, but I dare say they are too much taken up with their own concerns to listen to such sensible conversation as ours.'

Now I am quite unable to say whether the conversation that took place in the refreshment-room during the next hour and a half was sensible or not; I can only record that Mr. Chichester and Miss Fleming seemed to derive very intense interest from it; that it was renewed among the geraniums and camellias on the landing after supper; that it was carried on with unflagging zeal up to the last moment when Paul handed Esther into her carriage at Mrs. Strangeways' door.

'And I maintain,' said Milly Dashwood, as they were driving home, 'I maintain that for thorough-going, steady, undeviating flirtation our dear quiet Miss Fleming goes in with a heartier good-will than any human being I ever saw, Mrs. Strangeways, you, Jane, and I and everybody else included. Did you ever know before that Paul had it in him to look as he has looked to-night? Positively I heard some one say he was the handsomest man in the room.'

'I never saw Paul look really interested before,' answered Jane; but there was a slight shade of bitterness in her voice. 'I told him just as we left, with five or six people listening, that he and I were engaged no longer; and the way in which he acted the part of an injured lover was faultless. Nothing brings a man's faculties out like finding for the first time that some one really

appreciates him. Don't you think so, Esther?'

But Miss Fleming was unaccountably silent, and continued so during all the remainder of their homeward drive.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE RED-BRICK HOUSE.

Miss Fleming threw away her bouquet—yes, every flower that Paul had given her—next morning: she said to herself that she would dally with disloyalty no longer, would drive away by force all alien thoughts or images at once and for ever from her breast.

What had she to do with any man but Oliver? What mattered it to her, an engaged woman, that Paul Chichester's voice was eloquent, his thoughts akin to hers, his face like the little long-loved Vandyck upon the wall at Countisbury? An honest sunburnt face, not too intellectual, but set upon a pair of stalwart manly shoulders, a hearty boyish voice expressing commonplace, boyish thoughts, were the themes upon which duty and honour alike told her her imagination must dwell. Why had she ever seen Paul?—with a sigh this.—Why had she been brought to feel that such a horrible temptation as infidelity could ever come within her reach?

As she was sitting alone, Mrs. Tudor not yet up, in the cheerless winter morning, vacillating between good intentions of writing a letter to Malta, and haunting regrets that she had not kept one poor little spray out of Paul's bouquet, a loud double knock came at the house-door; and in another minute Millicent Dashwood ran, her face beaming with excitement, into the room.

'Put your hat on, Esther; I'm on the scent at last; put your hat on at once. I'll tell you what it is as we go along—something about Paul. Jane is waiting for us in the cathedral yard; and we can go up the short way across the hill to B——.'

'But for what, Milly? What are we to go to B—— for, on this par-

ticularly uninviting winter's morning?"

'To see Paul Chichester, and find out his secret. Will that content you?'

Apparently it did, for Esther ran upstairs, and got ready in a very meek and unquestioning frame of mind (perhaps she thought the sharp winter morning would brace her sufficiently for the effort of that Malta letter), and in another ten minutes was walking between the two Dashwoods up the narrow frosted lane which led the nearest way from the city to B—.

'This is exclusively a scheme of Milly's,' remarked Jane, in a dignified manner, as they emerged at length into the high road. 'Mr. Chichester's comings and goings are, I beg distinctly to state, a matter of the most perfect indifference to me; and if they were not, I would not stoop to looking after him or any other man in the world. As Milly is bent, however, upon finding out the destination of all Paul's white flowers, it certainly is better that we should be here in a body than that the silly child should run after him alone.'

'It would not have deterred me, Miss Dashwood, even if you *had* been too dignified to come,' cried Milly, in her pert way. 'At this hour of the morning there's no fear of seeing any one but the victim himself; and I could carry off my part quite well enough with Paul to prevent him from even thinking I was looking after him.'

Esther stopped suddenly.

'You don't mean to say, Jane, that we are following Mr. Chichester? Milly, you never told me this. If he was to see me—to see us, I mean—what would he say of us? I don't think I can go any further.' And then she blushed crimson.

You can imagine the outpouring of Dashwood irony at this exhibition of shyness, the little reminiscences of Mrs. Strangways' conservatory, the speculations as to whether talking to one man during an entire evening, or taking an early country walk for the good of one's health, involved the greater amount of moral delinquency? To

escape it all, Esther felt that she would go anywhere, spy anybody's actions—even Paul's. 'I don't care about Mr. Chichester seeing me,' she remarked, after walking on passively and in silence for some minutes, 'you know that very well. I only thought, from what you said, that he knew Milly meant to watch him.'

'It would not disturb my peace of mind if he did,' cried Miss Milly. 'I haven't any of the fine feelings about Mr. Chichester that everyone else seems to possess to such an alarming extent. If Paul Chichester, or Arthur Peel, or anybody I happen to know, acts one kind of life and carries on another, I like to come to the real meaning of it all—*voilà tout*. If Mr. Chichester pays devoted attention to Esther Fleming up till two o'clock in the morning, and then at eleven in the forenoon is seen carrying a bouquet of flowers to some lady at B—, I say appearances are against him, and it is the duty of society to get up the best-organized evidence possible for the future hearing of the case.'

'And—and—he really has been seen with these flowers again, then?' Miss Fleming asks, faintly.

'Seen this morning with a superb bouquet, Esther dear—heaths, azaleas, camellias—everything far better than he took for you—or Jenny; which was it?—last night. As soon as I saw him pass from our back drawing-room window, I put on my hat and ran off for you, like a true friend; and now you may depend upon it we have fairly got the wretched criminal in our toils. He always goes up the hill by the high road, and never extends his walk beyond the second milestone. I heard that much from his own lips the other day. And unless he goes about five miles round through the woods, he *must* return by this road. What a general of armies I should have made!'

Persons possessed of that inferior order of tact that arises from the head, not the heart, like Miss Millicent Dashwood, generally succeed, I have observed, in the small undertakings of life. After walking slowly up and down one half-mile

of road for about three quarters of an hour, Milly's generalship culminated in success. Paul Chichester, utterly unconscious that he was being watched, appeared in sight round a belt of fir-trees, which, at about two hundred yards' distance, formed the turning of the road.

'And, after all, we never saw what house he came from!' cried Milly. 'Just like my wretched luck! If we had been five minutes sooner we should have commanded a view of every house between this and B—. However, we must do the best we can—give Paul as much rope as possible, and afterwards make out who lives in all the houses nearest this way. Please don't blush so alarmingly, Esther,' she added, when they were within a few yards of Paul. 'Mind, if you feel guilty, I do not. I am taking an early walk on the hills for my health, and if sore pressed have a mythical pot of currant-jelly in my pocket for one of mamma's Sunday scholars—mythical also—who resides upon the common.'

And Milly, and, indeed, Jane too, put on a little air of utter girlish unconsciousness as they approached that would have deceived a much more cynical and suspicious observer than Paul Chichester. Had they not been trained to act under every description of circumstance which a young woman's life can impose upon her? Trained in the highest histrionic school of all—religious hypocrisy, as little children; trained in mock-modesty and real assurance as school-girls; trained as grown-up women in every subterfuge and artifice of social life? As Esther glanced at them now, and felt with painful consciousness the blushes of her own guilt-betraying face, she felt how fearfully far behind her savage bringing up had left her in this, as in so many other of the first, common amenities of civilization.

'You are out early, young ladies, walking off the effects of your last night's dissipation, I suppose?'

'Oh, Milly and I are always early walkers!' answered Jane, coolly. 'As to Esther, I believe five o'clock is her normal hour for starting with

cousin David upon the Devonshire wilds. The wonder is, seeing you, Paul! I thought eleven was the earliest hour at which any young man of the present day could ever think of encountering the fatigues of breakfast.'

'But I am not a young man,' answered Paul. 'I am not young, I am not fashionable, and the duties of my life force me, of necessity, to be an early riser.'

Something in the tone of his voice made Esther turn—she was gazing intently at one of the leafless hedges until now—and look at him full.

It would be difficult to imagine any man wearing less the air of a lover who has just quitted his mistress than Paul Chichester did at that moment. Years seemed added to him since they had parted not ten hours ago at Mrs. Strangways' house—years charged with the burden of dark and heavy life. His face was fearfully pale; his eyes heavy; his dress uncared-for.

'Have you been for a very long walk, Mr. Chichester?' asked Milly, in her childish little tone. 'I think, but I am not quite sure, I saw you pass by the back of our house this morning.'

'Yes; I was on my way to B— then,' answered Paul, quietly. 'It is my daily walk when I am in Bath. Have you recovered from last night's exertion, Miss Fleming? I need hardly ask, though.' And his eyes told Esther what he thought of her looks.

'I don't know what Miss Fleming's exertions were, but listening to Mr. Chichester,' cried Milly. 'Listening to Mr. Chichester and consuming an ice very slowly every hour and a half, and supporting herself under the weight of Mr. Chichester's flowers. By-the-by, Paul'—it was a common habit of the Miss Dashwoods to call every man they knew by his Christian name—'where do you get all your flowers from? Do white azaleas and camellias spring up unbidden beneath your feet in January, or are you, after all, a Rothschild in disguise? The latter, I suspect. Such a bouquet as I saw in your

hands about two hours ago could not have been bought under—well, under seven and sixpence at least.’

‘I am delighted to think that I, or anything I do, can inspire Miss Millicent Dashwood with interest,’ said Paul; but Esther noted that his lip trembled a very little as he spoke. ‘Hothouse flowers cannot be got for nothing in January, Miss Milly, and I am not a Rothschild in disguise, but a poor devil who often does not know how he will get his dinner from day to day, and whose tailor’s bill—well, I leave you to judge what that would be—if it were ever paid!’

And Paul held out his arm and ostentatiously displayed a sleeve whose texture the term ‘threadbare’ would be scarcely adequate to represent.

‘I don’t see that we have got any answer about the flowers, though,’ said Jane, rather maliciously. ‘Although my right to question you is over, Paul, I must say I think it intensely mysterious where all these lavishly-delicious bouquets go every day; don’t you, Esther?’

Paul looked quickly into Esther’s face, but she gave no answer. With shame and contrition she felt that to her this was no trifling matter, as it was to the Dashwoods; that her heart was contracted with quite a sharp anxiety as she waited to hear what extenuation Paul could plead for his strange prodigality.

‘My flowers go to a person who cares for such things,’ he remarked, testily, as Esther gave no sign of speaking; and there was something in the tone of his voice which might have told even Millicent Dashwood she had best ask no more. ‘To a person who cares for such things—a person to please whom I consider no sacrifice ridiculous.’ And an ominous red rose in Paul’s dark face.

‘Then they are all for one person!’ cried out Milly, clapping her hands. ‘I was sure of it—I was quite sure of it! Don’t be angry, you good old Paul; we’ll promise never to tell a creature anything about it, only for you, who have always pretended to be so staid and wrapped up in yourself and nobody else! I declare, as long as I live, I shall

always credit every confirmed old bachelor I know with some wild romance of mystery after this!’

‘And you call Paul an old bachelor, you silly child?’ said Jane. ‘He will hardly thank you for that.’

‘Why not?’ answered Paul. ‘I am almost thirty already (and, to Miss Millicent that is as old as forty or fifty), and I am so resolutely determined upon continuing as I am now all my life, that she is perfectly right in looking upon me and calling me what I very soon shall be—a confirmed old bachelor.’

Then pride or some other feeling made Esther speak at last.

‘Do you like this weather, Mr. Chichester?’ And her voice was, or she intended it to be, as thoroughly calm and indifferent as though she had taken no part nor interest in any of their conversation. ‘To me it is the worst kind of winter’s day possible—cold and dull and desolate. It suits this scene well. What sort of people, I wonder, can choose to live in such a road as this?’

And in spite of herself she really did shudder as she looked along the dreary road down which Paul had even now come.

‘Yes, I wonder,’ cried Milly, nothing daunted in her own intentions. ‘Paul, what sort of people live out here? There are no gentlemen’s houses at all that I can see, except that red-brick one away on the left. Who lives there, do you know?’

‘Not in the least.’

‘And in the little white terrace that we see in the distance?’

‘That white terrace contains, as far as I can guess from here, eight or ten houses,’ said Paul. ‘Do you expect me to be acquainted with the names of all their inmates?’

‘I want to know if you are acquainted with any one among them all? As Esther says, it awakens one’s curiosity to know what kind of human creature could, of its own free-will, come and settle down and exist by the side of such a road as this.’

‘Then I regret to say that, as far as I am concerned, your curiosity must remain unsatisfied. I know no more than you do of the place or of its inhabitants either. Young la-

dies, good morning to you. I have already kept you too long standing here in the cold.'

And after just lifting his hat, but without offering to shake hands with any of them, Mr. Chichester turned round abruptly and walked away.

Milly was loud in her delight at the success of her own scheme.

'The thing is all as plain as possible. What should he have been in such a rage for except at seeing that we had found him out? Now, the next thing to ascertain is, what kind of people live up here? *grandes dames* or *demi-monde*? I made a rapid calculation as we were talking to him, Jenny, and from the short time that had passed since we last turned by the fir-trees, I am convinced he could only have come out of one of the houses just beyond the turnpike. The thing is to make out who lives in them. Half-and-half people are just the ones it is so difficult to get at the truth about.'

'And what right have we to find out anything in the matter?' cried Esther, hotly. 'I, for one, declare that I have no interest whatever in Mr. Chichester's private life, and that I decline assisting in any way at attempting to solve what he chooses shall be hidden. What he said on the subject was quite enough, I think, to make us feel that we should let it rest. He may be engaged, he may be married, as you suggested the other day, Milly, but, whatever it is, he evidently has some secret he chooses to keep, and which none of us have the slightest right to investigate.'

Jane Dashwood, quickly mutable in little as in great things, came round in a moment to Esther's way of thinking. 'I'm ashamed to feel what mean things you and I are always doing, Milly, though, if the truth is told, I do them more to get rid of another two or three hours of life than out of real intrinsic meanness! Let us give up Paul and his mystery now and for ever. It's twelve already, and I've got to dress and beat Mrs. Strangways' for luncheon at two.'

'To meet Arthur and Miss Lynes, Jenny? You must remember I haven't got great interests in life, like you, to save me from my own

small, mean, inborn tendencies. At least you'll walk with me to the turning of the road once more? There can be nothing dishonourable in that, can there, Miss Fleming?'

By dint of persuasion, or sheer pertinacity, Milly Dashwood usually carried her point. She got her companions back to the turning of the road. She did more; she got them to stand by and listen while she questioned a milliner's girl returning, band-box in hand, towards Bath, as to the capabilities of the neighbourhood.

Young ladies? no, there were no young ladies in any of the houses hereabout, leastways not to her knowledge.

Where had she been herself?

Carrying a cap home to old Miss Williams, the last detached white house that you saw at the winding of the road.

And who lived in the terrace of small houses next?

She didn't know. Madame Hélène only served ladies, and she had never had to carry anything to such places as that.

And who lived in the great red-brick house close at hand?

Why, Dr. Wilmot, of course. She thought every one had heard of Dr. Wilmot. Only yesterday she had carried up a wreath—with a half-smile this—to one of the ladies at Doctor Wilmot's.

'A young lady?' asked Milly, eagerly.

'Young? Oh no, miss, at least not that I know of, but I didn't see her myself. You know, of course, miss, who Dr. Wilmot is? the great mad doctor that people come from all over the country to consult.'

'Thank you, that will do. My friend must live further on. And we have just had our walk for nothing,' remarked Milly, when the girl had left them. 'Old Miss Williams, and a row of poor cottages, and Dr. Wilmot, the mad doctor. What a mean, disgusting thing curiosity is, when you begin to find out that you can't satisfy it.'

They turned round at once towards Bath, and in another minute the Dashwoods had forgotten Paul's existence, and were entering, heart and soul, into the dissection of some

other person's private and personal history. But when they reached the belt of firs that marked the winding of the road, Esther turned and glanced across that cluster of houses one of whose thresholds Paul's step must have crossed not many minutes before.

Long afterwards she remembered every outline of that frozen silent landscape; remembered, with a shudder of pain, one lonely red-brick house, standing out, dark and desolate, against the leaden winter sky!

THE COLONEL'S LOVE-CHANCE; OR, THE STORY OF THE BLANK ENVELOPE.

PART I.

IT was nearly four o'clock. A deplorable, hopeless day it had been since morning. The drenched miserable trees looked like phantoms in the fading light of the November afternoon.

In the library of Stoke House, Mrs. Lyster sat knitting near the window, discussing her pet subject with her favourite guest. Arthur Lanesborough, 'her dear Colonel,' as his hostess called him, leant carelessly against the window; rather a handsome, graceful-looking man, about eight-and-twenty or thirty, with short smooth hair, and large expressive dark eyes. His companion was the stoutest, bluntest-featured old lady that ever forswore crinoline.

They were the dearest possible friends, those two—widely as they differed, in points mental as well as physical; and he was making her the happiest of women just now, by announcing that he 'wanted a wife, and would she help him?'

What woman does not feel her vocation to be specially that of helping the angels in their pleasing occupation of making marriages? Mrs. Lyster spent her life placidly, in conjugating the verb to 'match-make' in all its tenses, and an opportunity was now to be given her to put forth her finest talents, and exercise her dearest hobby. Notes had been written, fatted calves killed; and on this very afternoon the party was to assemble, from whose numbers, she fondly hoped, her dear Colonel might choose a help-meet. Damsels of sorts had been summoned—'on sight,' as the

tradesmen say—and the unconscious fair ones were even now on their way from Dumbleton Station, with their various parents and guardians.

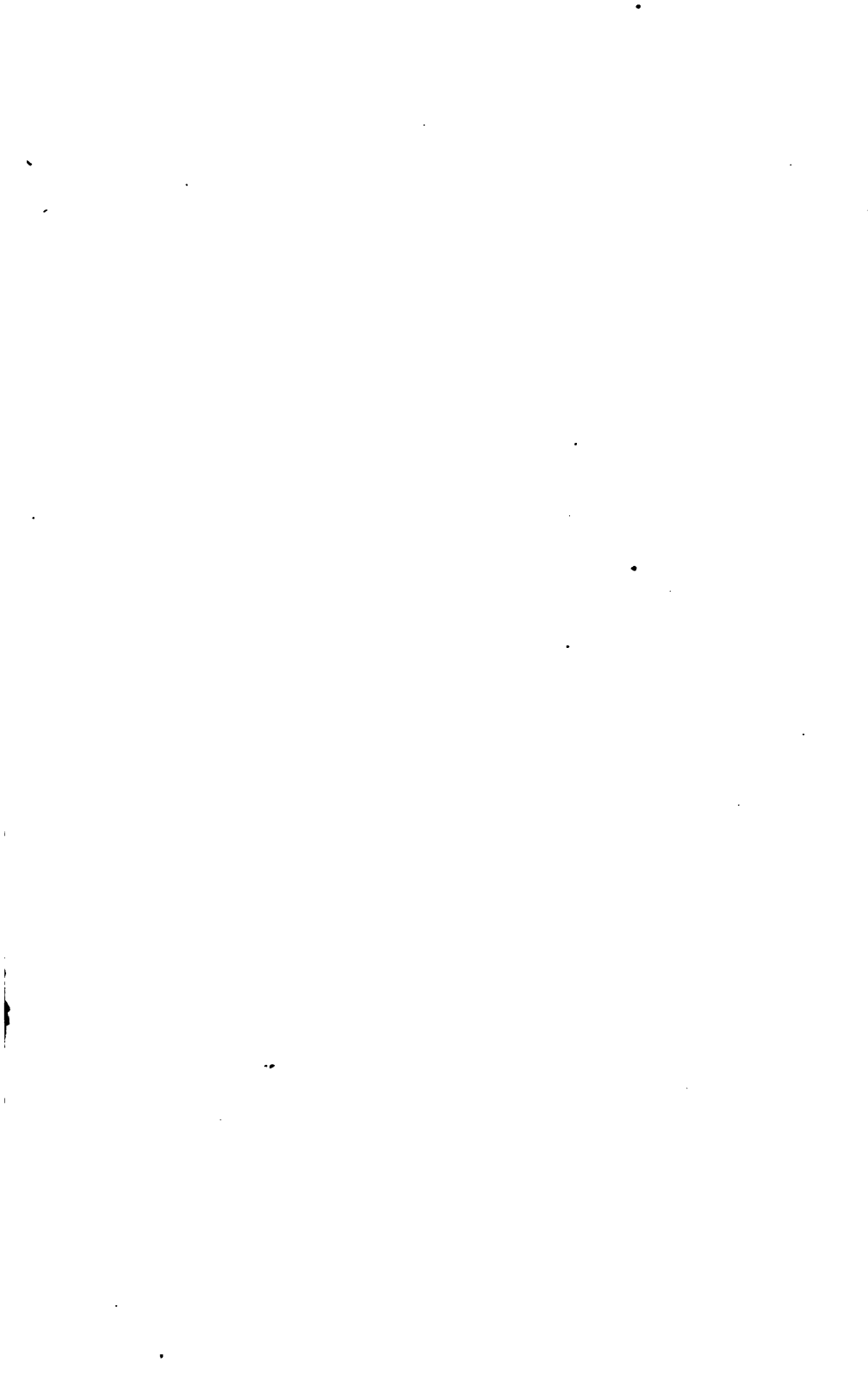
Mrs. Lyster was in the middle of a long and slightly-disconnected harangue on matrimony in general, and sundry couples in particular, when the sound of approaching carriages announced the impending guests.

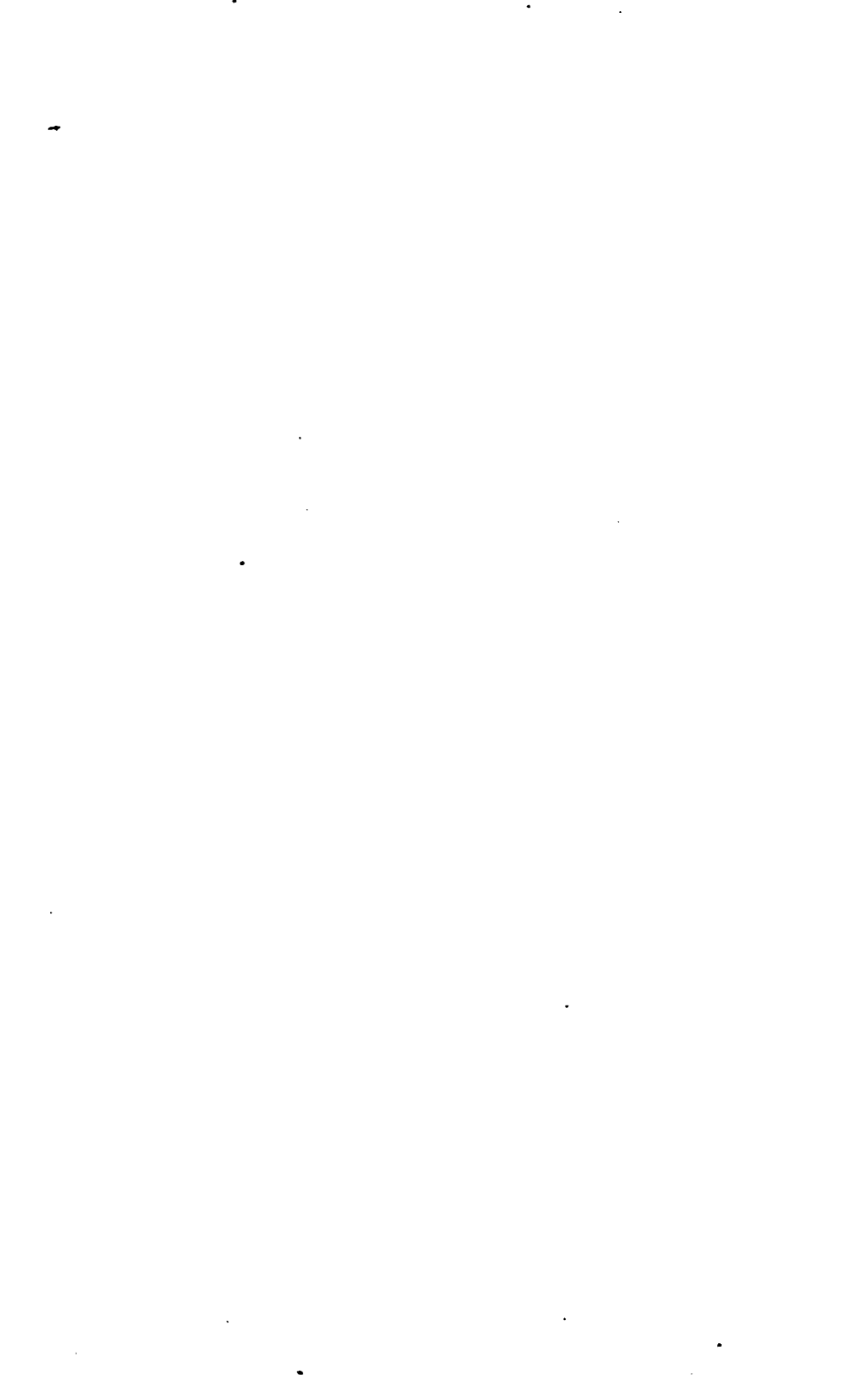
'Dearest and best,' said Lanesborough, interrupting her, pleadingly, 'I will be as good as gold. I will propose to them all, and they may toss up for me among themselves; only, I beseech you, do not bully me, and, above all, do not expect me to fall in love. I will "behave as sich" to the utmost of my power; and if the young party will propose to me of her own accord, so much the better; I shall be saved all trouble in the matter.'

The indignant reply of his hostess was cut short by the appearance of the butler to usher in the new arrivals; and Lanesborough made his exit by one door, as Admiral and the Misses Compton, Mr. and Miss Rowley, &c., &c., entered by the other.

Under the datura blossoms in the conservatory, Lanesborough stood smoking, till five o'clock tea and the dressing-gong had taken place, and then he lit his candle and went to dress, saying to himself, that he didn't feel much like a man who was going to see his future wife that evening.

The guests were already in the drawing-room when he came down again, and he had scarcely time to distinguish those that were strangers



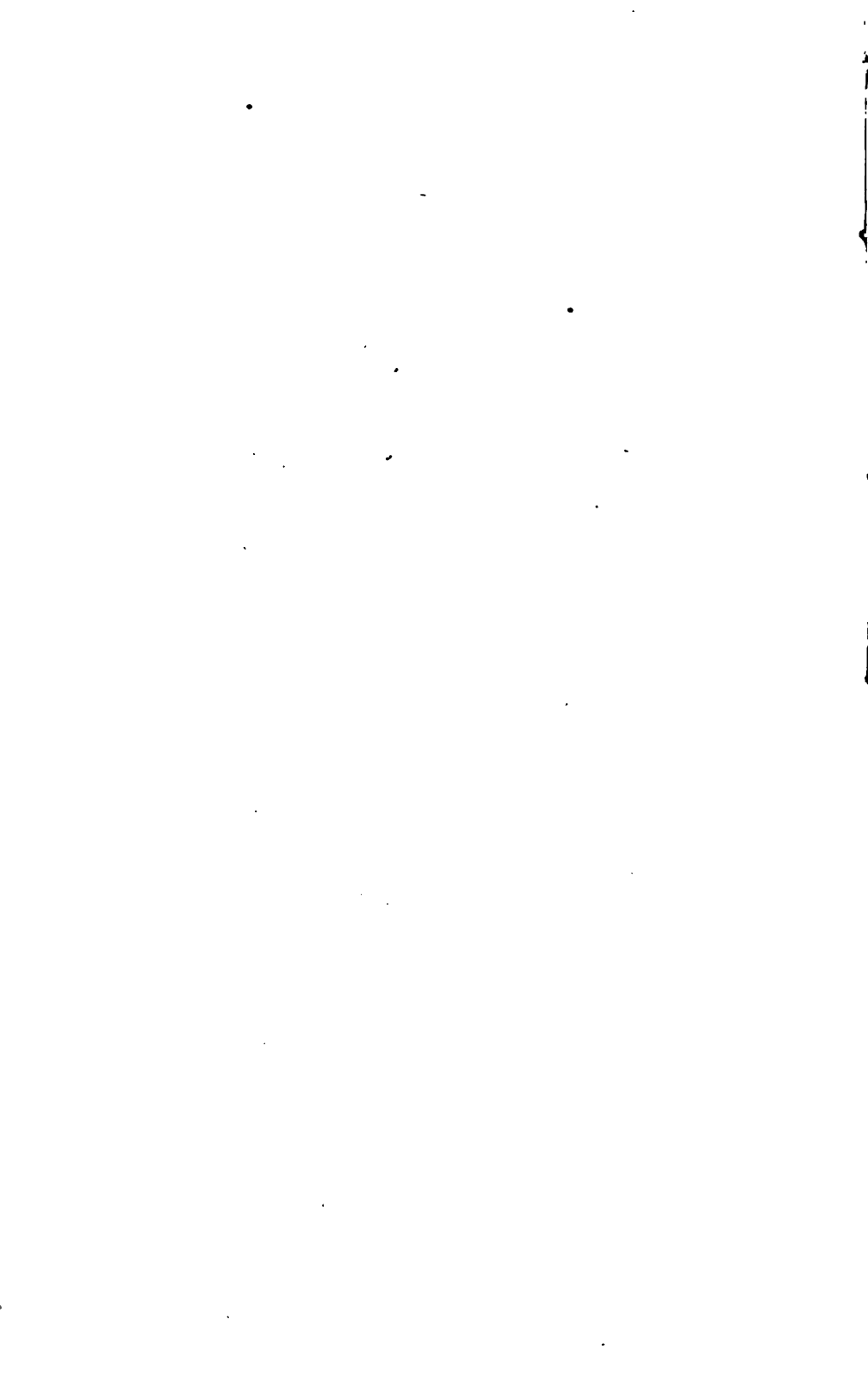




"Too late!" One echo more to those words that have been ringing through the world since the day that the angel stood at the gate of Eden with his flaming sword—too late! And to her woman's heart it came differently than to his, this knowledge; for mingled in her was relief intense from the presence of a long borne burden, with the new pain of a fresh wound."

Drawn by S. A.

See the "Blank Envelope—a Story."



to him from his acquaintances, before dinner. There was a stout woman in green, and her uneasy-looking husband in tight boots. There were three little girls in pink silk—the Misses Compton: tidy, well-dressed little people, with small features, fair hair, and rather red, thin hands. There were some stray men, and there was a tall girl in white, whose face he did not see, because her brother came and claimed Eton acquaintance, and he could no longer look about him.

At dinner, just across the table, he saw her, like a fair picture in a framework of fern leaves. A pale, sweet face, with dark, shadowy eyes, and brown hair wreathed with violets. What was it that came so suddenly back to him? Was it the subtle perfume of some lily flower? the wistful marble face of a statue? an old dream, long forgotten, that face recalled? Some strange, sweet memory it was, surely, that so strongly moved him. He forgot to reply to his right-hand neighbour. He refused *vol-au-vent aux huîtres*, and took mutton-outlets. Something was the matter with him. Was he in love? In love! It seems to me that I am standing in the summer air, the breath of flowers filling my senses with a dreamy, wonderful happiness. I cannot analyze it; I do not question it. My heart beats quickly; my eyelids droop, but I am not weary; I could lie under a tree and gaze through the quivering leaves into the blue air above, all my life, I think.

They did the usual things, played at 'letters,' or did crochet (the ladies, I mean); and the men tossed the ivory letters about, toyed with anything that lay on the table, paper-cutters and little boxes, and secretly longed for the smoking-room.

Her usual fate, Maud Rowley felt it. The only man she could have cared to speak to had not exchanged one word with her. She sat musing in her arm-chair that night over this her fate, and made profitable reflections for future use.

He also, in his arm-chair, sat and thought that night, the window open (in accordance with the uncomfortable notions of his sex). The

candle flickered, wasted, and went out with a puff, while the chintz curtains blew about impulsively in the rainy wind. He did not heed the candle; for between him and the fire there rose a white, fair vision, with deep, soft eyes, and he was coaxing it to remain, recalling, as in a dream, the touch of her dress, the faint scent of the violets she wore, the shy, sweet tones of her voice, a little hesitating and uncertain in her words.

It did not occur to him that he had not spoken to her.

When the fire was nearly out he got up, and perceived what havoc the wind had made at the toilet-table; how the little bottles were upset, and the razors, and the studs, and the heap of letters had all been blown down. He resettled them, and shut the window, without losing the thread of his thought.

'The keeper will be at the door at eleven,' Mrs. Lyster announced at breakfast next morning. 'To-morrow you will like to hunt, I suppose, but to-day the meet is too far off. The home cover,' she added, confidentially to Lanesborough; 'I shall expect a goodly bag. At eleven, then,' she repeated, as she marshalled her ladies into the library, where she meant them to spend their morning. She provided them with photograph books, and tapped the deposits of crochet and worsted-work on the tables, signifying thus to them how they might employ themselves till luncheon; and Lanesborough, after some vague wandering up and down stairs, and searching amidst the hats in the hall, submitted to his fate, and joined the other men outside, they, in due time, setting forth to covert, and seeing no more of the ladies till dinner-time.

Is it not one of the instances—so many, so little appreciated—of the powers of feminine endurance, that ladies will pass without complaint hours of such unutterable boredom—boredom under which men would fret, complain, and at length rebel?

Till seven o'clock! All day long shut up together, and in their best gowns, too!

Can we wonder if they talk about

bonnets, are spiteful, and have five o'clock tea?

It was literally all day at Stoke, for the gentlemen, on their return from shooting, being regarded as the embodiment of muddy boots only, were banished from polite society to seek lower regions, which the soiled garments could neither injure nor offend. With his feet on the fender of his own room, Lanesborough sat in the indolent, delicious half-hour before the dressing-bell sounded, and in dreamy, comfortable position of body and mind, looked at the sliding-panels in a magic-lantern that his fancy held up before him. A future life spread itself out for him; a picture of home happiness, pure and delightful; a fair, blank page, for him to fill with golden characters, wanting but one small word to stamp it. Alas! that little word 'if' It has a fate wrapt up in it. On an 'if' hangs oftentimes a heart; behind a five-barred 'if' one may stand locked out for life. A small word, truly, but bearing a mighty meaning.

The bell rang. It behaved him to get up and dress, to attend to certain rites destructive to day dreams, and which, being accompanied by some personal discomfort and fatigue, disturbed and irritated the course of his reflections.

'She will send me in with some horrid old wretch again to-night. I know she will; or with Compton No. 2,' he said, as he struggled with his collar-button. 'Ah! I have a dodge!' (the button was triumphantly squeezed into its hole): 'I know a dodge!' He finished his toilet, and went down complacent and content.

'Let all things be done decently and in order,' was the precept most dear to Mrs. Lyster; and the adjustment of guests at a dinner-party affording much scope for the carrying out of it, was by her greatly studied and seriously performed—performed, namely, as follows.

To the Bashaw of Two Tails (he of three tails being appropriated to herself as hostess) Mrs. Lyster sent the Admiral, with, 'You will take in Lady Somebody, dear Bashaw,' Lady Somebody being duly indicated.

The door is thrown open: off sets the Admiral with Mrs. Three-tailed Bashaw, followed by he of two tails and his charge. Then, in a clear voice, Mrs. Lyster would say, 'Mr. So-and-so, ahem! will you take in Miss Somebody? Mr. Somebody, ahem! will you take in Mrs. So-and-so?' The ahem being a sort of make-ready before presenting arms.

Now Lanesborough came in a little late on purpose, and stationed himself behind the sofa on which the young ladies were seated: behind, also, Mrs. Lyster.

'Dinner on the table.' Away went the Admiral. 'Major Brabazon, ahem! will you take Miss Hughes?' A stout matron opposite gazed at Lanesborough with a look that portended his impending fate. Now for the dodge. 'Colonel Lanesborough—' Mrs. Lyster paused a little, because she did not see him; and before the next words could be uttered, he had offered his arm to Miss Rowley, and was half way into the dining-room.

How the conversation began he did not know. He found himself telling her a thousand things about himself that he never told any one; his tastes, his favourite places; the finest tones in his nature answering to her light touch. She listened with such charming, genuine intentness, her eyes deepening and flashing with sympathy or dissent, her sweet voice speaking with such delightful earnestness about her favourite opinions and books. It seemed as if they had only begun, when the signal was given, and the ladies left the room.

'I hope my young ladies mean to give me a little music,' Mrs. Lyster said, when coffee had gone round: 'we will have a round game presently, but I should like a little music first.' So the Misses Compton were in the middle of a duet when the gentlemen came in, and Lanesborough dropped into the other half of Maud's *casseuse*, and took hold of the canoe puzzle she held.

He did not say much, but he was very happy. He was building the first story of his house of cards, and it stood beautifully; stood, as yet, with an *aplomb* that promised fairly,

as such first stories do, when the materials are not brick and mortar, but the sweet fancy of love; when it is the second or third tier in the Spanish castle that will fall with a crash, and bury all that bid so well at first.

She played to him—to him only, it seemed to his ear—and he could have stood there all night watching the answer of her countenance to the notes that rang so full and tender a sound to the touch of her slender fingers; it was as if all her soul spoke to him in her music, and she played with her eyes bent on the piano, so that he could look at her gentle face without disturbing its equanimity.

'Now we will have pounce commerce, sixpenny pool. Come, Colonel Lanesborough, you get chairs, please.' Mrs. Lyster came bustling up, and gave him a poke, to awake him from his dream. 'Come along; sit there. Now, nobody talk, please; silence, if you please. Miss Compton—there—between Colonel Lanesborough and Major Brabazon. Miss Rowley, here—there—plenty of room: I have no crinoline; now—now—there.' The good woman hustled them into their places, and to Lanesborough the game was a weariness of spirit and an abomination, and he called down objurgations from his hostess and the Major of Artillery for the bad cards he threw out, and the other sundry evidences he manifested of an absent mind.

'How happy you will be to-morrow,' Blanche Compton said coaxingly to him, as he handed the bedroom-candles at the foot of the staircase.

'Happy,' he repeated. 'I hope so—very happy.'

'Your dear hunting—'

'Ah! my dear hunting, to be sure,' and he laughed.

'It is a thaw, they say—you will have a charming day, while we poor people mope at home.'

His eyes were fixed on the group half-way upstairs; he did not heed her, so she repeated plaintively, 'You will be so happy.'

'Thank you, Miss Blanche, as you wish me success,' he said, sud-

denly turning to her, and taking the small hand she held out, he gave it a squeeze so vigorous as to leave a doubtful impression on her mind as well as a very indubitable one on her fingers.

It was a black frost next morning. Ground like a board—dull hard sky—not a chance of a run. Nevertheless Charles Rowley appeared in pink, and ate a hunter's breakfast—under protest. 'Oh, he must go!' he said; 'he had ordered his horses to be there; besides, he had private information from the clerk of the weather-office that the day would change.'

He had a letter to write before going out, and he came into the library, and made much ado with the young ladies at the big writing-table before he was comfortable.

'Now this is what I call a well-regulated house!' he exclaimed, when all the paraphernalia was duly settled close to his hand; 'I like a table with everything one wants. Do you know, Miss Compton, that when I want to write a letter at home, I have to walk all over the house to collect materials!'

'Oh, Charley! what a dreadful story.'

'It is as true as gospel, Miss Compton. My mother is an excellent woman; but she has no more idea of comfort than a waterspout!'

'Don't believe him, Miss Compton. There is everything in the little room, you know, Charley; only you never go there.'

'Yes; an inkstand with no ink in it; three pens with one nib between them; and if you take up a sheet of paper, you discover a memorandum about mutton on the other side.'

There was a general laugh, and Maud told him that it did not much matter whether he wrote at home or not, since no one could read his letters.

'My handwriting? a very good hand—a fine, manly hand,' he said, beginning his letter at last, and holding up a few words as specimen. 'Horrible!' every one said, except Emma Compton, who maintained that there was some character in the scrawl. A small discussion ensued on the exhibition of individual cha-

racter in handwriting, and some one proposed that 'each should write a few words, and send the result to Mrs. What's-her-name, in London, who tells your character—would it not be fun?'

So they all wrote but Maud Rowley, and when they teased and entreated her—Lanesborough more especially begging her to do so—she fled from them and took refuge in a far corner and a picture-book. Thither presently Lanesborough followed her. The others had sunk into quiescence—Charles Rowley had gone to hunt; Major Brabazon was deep in the 'Saturday,' and the Comptons in crochet-work.

'Why would not you let me see your handwriting?' Lanesborough said, when he had found a place beside her on the sofa.

'I write a bad hand.'

'What does that matter—you were not afraid of that?'

'I don't know—I am silly about those things. I think, you know, that if all sorts of horrible qualities came to sight by my handwriting, I should not like it.'

He laughed a little. 'That would not prove their existence, would it?'

'I don't know; it is like having one's fate foretold.'

'You are superstitious?'

'Am I? I will tell you what makes me think of those things as I do. When I was little, I was told that my garden—we had each a garden—would be a type of myself; of my heart, you know, and my life. Well, I dug and dug, and watered, and planted things, and nothing grew—nothing but some weeds and a gooseberry bush that couldn't help itself.' Her voice faltered a little, half laughing, half tearful, 'I grew quite to dread my garden,' she said, and put up her hand to her face like a child, to hide the colour that spread over it.

'Nothing but weeds,' he repeated, looking very tenderly at the little hand; 'poor little garden, there must have been a hole in the fence.'

'Oh, yes!' she said, 'quite a little hole; but the rabbits got in, you know.' A great clear drop fell on the picture-book, and Lanesborough felt impotently savage with the

'somebody' whose insinuations had caused the tear.

The party was to break up. The last evening had come. Lanesborough followed Charles Rowley to his room, and took up his position by the chimney-piece, under an unacknowledged sense of inspiration from warmth in his rear.

'Do you go straight home from here?' he asked.

Rowley was hunting for a cigar, and had donned shooting jacket.

'Here is a famous one—have it?'

'No, thanks.'

'Eh! do we go home? yes, I believe so—straight home.'

'I shall be in your part of the world this winter myself. I shall come and have a look at you, if you have no objection?'

'Delighted, my dear sir—very glad to see you.'

'Your people—your father, won't object, will he?'

'My people?' a dim idea began to dawn on Rowley's mind. 'No, to be sure they won't. I'll tell you what, you shall come and shoot—the covers have to be shot some time next month. We've place for a gun;—not Suffolk pheasants, you know, but very fair wild shooting.'

'Thanks, thanks, very much—never mind about the shooting so long as I may come—I should like to be introduced to your father—anytime, you know, that suits.'

Lanesborough stood still playing with the match-cases, and Rowley, after lighting his cigar, and offering another, asked where he was to be found.

'At the Crown Inn, Barkham; I shall be there for a month or so; any time after next week a letter will find me there; or if I go away it will be forwarded. You will not forget—Crown Inn, Barkham!'

'No, I sha'n't forget; I shall write some time—some time. Let me see, we shall shoot the covers about the 25th. The 25th of this month. Yes, I think so. Will that do?'

'Perfectly well, thanks.' Lanesborough was silent for a while, his thoughts roving in a meadow of happy fancies, till, perceiving that his coat-tails were on the verge of

roasting, he started, said good-night, and went to his own room.

'Delightful day, yes — quite warm,' he replied next morning, when Miss Compton bid him a plaintive good-bye; he was awfully 'distract,' and did not hear a word she said, and he never said good-bye at all to poor little Miss Blanche; whereas she was considerably impressed with him, and possibly from an instinct of unattainableness, had set part of her small affections upon him.

Everybody was going away—he went to the door of the omnibus and stood there, saying nothing, and holding to his lips the bit of myrtle that Maud Rowley had stolen from the conservatory. Maud had nothing to say either: just as they were about to start, he said, 'Your brother has asked me to come and see him, may I come?'

'We shall be delighted to see you,' she said, colouring a little.

'That means that you do not care whether I come or not?'

Maud's colour rose till her face was one blush, and she held out her hand for the myrtle.

'You will show me the little garden?' he said.

'Yes; but it is bare just now.'

'Will you plant this, and see if it will grow?'

'Would it grow?' she asked, doubtfully.

'That is just what I want to know. I hope it will—you will tell me when I come?' he said.

'Now then, good sir, out of the way, please; we shall be late,' Charles Rowley said. He pushed him aside, jumped into the omnibus, drove off. Addio—bei giorni.

They were alone again in the library—Mrs. Lyster and her dear Colonel. An ominous silence prevailed on the subject of the departed guests. Poor dear old lady, she was not quite happy. 'If marriages were made in heaven,' she thought, 'the angels must know very little about it, if they don't select Blanche Compton to be his wife.' Presently Mrs. Lyster said, 'Admiral Compton asked me where you

were to be found, if he wished to write to you. I said, I thought a letter would always find you at the club.'

'I shall be at Barkham for the next six weeks, I think.'

'Oh! I fancied, perhaps, you might be visiting.'

'If I am invited to the Rowleys,' he said, rising, 'I shall go there; but that depends on an "if;" letters can be sent to Barkham, at any rate.' There was no answer made to this, and Lanesborough in due time went out for rumination in general and a smoke in particular.

PART II.

'Am I to write it?' Lady Rowley asked.

'I only know,' replied her son, 'that I never accept an invite unless it comes from the lady.'

'Shall I say from the 25th to the 30th?'

'Oh, well, say on the 25th, and then he can stay or not, as matters turn out.'

'Better not specify times and seasons. To-day is the 19th, isn't it?'

Lady Rowley left the room with her writing-book and a whole bundle of papers and bills. Charles, still at breakfast, made an encampment of *de quoi manger* round his plate. Maud was crossing the hall, and she picked up the fallen papers that marked her mother's track.

'Mamma,' she said, coming into the drawing-room, 'you have dropped ever so many, and here is the receipt that you could not find; I found it in the schoolroom.'

'Oh, dear, how charming! Give it to me. I searched everywhere for it yesterday.' Lady Rowley put some of her papers on the chimney-piece, some on the table, let a few more drop under the chairs, and sat down at her 'davenport' with the bills.

'Can I write any of the invitations, mamma?'

'Thank you, darling, no; I think I shall have time for all. Are both the Knowleses to come, or only one?'

'Oh, both, mamma, I think. Have you plenty of gentlemen for them? you know they like some.'

'If all we ask come, there will be enough for them. But don't talk now, dear.'

There was a silence, and then a gentle creaking of the door, and a head was put in. 'Please, my lady, could you speak about the preserves; and oh, my lady, I came about the girl from Thomson's.'

Nurse and housekeeper demanded audiences. Lady Rowley left her desk, and started on a household raid, and Maud put down her work and gazed at the fire.

The children came in—two small girls and a boy; a meek governess came too, and a music lesson began, accompanied by rolling, tumbling, and occasional yells from the piccanninies not under instruction. Lady Rowley came back, found the noise distracting, and carried her apparatus into the little room beyond the drawing-room—a room cold, fireless, uncomfortable, with thin-legged chairs, and cups and saucers, and illogical knick-knacks—a room seldom entered, and never used unless, as on the present occasion, as a refuge from disturbance elsewhere.

Presently Maud wandered in after her mother. 'Mamma, here is that luckless receipt again.'

'Oh, dear Maud! Maud, what is his address?'

'Whose, mamma?'—her cheeks grew very pink.

'Colonel Lanesborough.'

'Mamma, are you writing to him?'

'Yes, dear, he is to come on the 25th.' Lady Rowley leant back, put her arm round her daughter's waist, and looked up smiling at her.

'Crown and Anchor Inn, Barkham, Lincolnshire, mamma.'

Maud bent and kissed her mother, and left the room quickly. 'Mamma is sure to write it wrong,' she said to herself. She took an envelope, addressed it in her most clear handwriting, put a stamp on, and brought it into the boudoir.

'Mamma, here is an envelope ready addressed,' she said, and laid it beside the blotting-book, by the heap of notes already written. There was an invasion of the children; a message from the gardener; a petition from the governess. The luncheon bell rang. Lady Rowley

left the letters, some in their envelopes, some lying folded ready to be directed, and was dragged by her olive-branches into the dining-room.

Maud was not hungry, but she helped potatoes and cut meat diligently for the youthful appetites. Just at the end Sir George came in. 'If your letters are ready, mamma,' he said, 'Charlie's groom can take them into Bosworth; he is going about a gun, and it saves a post.'

'Can I get them for you, mamma?' Maud said, springing up.

'No, dear, I will, if you will help Bobbie to some more pudding.'

Lady Rowley disappeared, and a minute after Maud heard her at the door giving to the groom the letters one by one, reading the name on each as she did so. 'Mrs. Knowles, Lord Tanton, Miss Amherst, Colonel Lanesborough, and a note to the apothecary.'

It was all right then, the letter had gone, she herself had addressed it; there could be no mistake. 'If only he comes!' she said to herself—'if only he comes!'

'That little room is too cold,' her mother said, reseating herself at the table. 'It must positively be shut up. The ink was frozen, and the windows let in a draught.'

A murky cold day; frost in the air; the Barkham hunt trembled for the morrow. 'Moon changes on the 22nd,' one red-coat said to another. 'This is the 20th; we had better try the gorse cover at once, we may be stopped next week.' It was quite early in the afternoon, but the man whom the red-coat addressed had had enough of hunting; he drew his horse out of the crowd, and rode off by himself towards Barkham.

'Post come in?' he asked directly he got into the court-yard of the Crown and Anchor, where his servant was dawdling.

'Yes, sir. I put your letters on the table upstairs, Colonel.'

Lanesborough went upstairs two steps at a time. There were three letters and a newspaper. He opened one after another rapidly, and without giving more than a glance to

each, flung them down again; but the last he held some time in his hand, examining it inside and out, for it was an empty envelope.

The servant came in with hot water, and became officious about his boots. 'Barnes,' Lanesborough said, 'did you get these letters from the postman yourself? has no one else touched them? did this one come with the others?'

'Yes, sir, they all came together. I took them myself from the post, sir. Three letters they were, sir. Dine in the coffee-room, sir?'

'No—yes. Never mind the straps, Barnes. I'll come down presently. There is a Bradshaw in the house, isn't there, Barnes?'

Barnes returned with the news that Bradshaw was *non est*, but a time-table was posted up in the coffee-room.

Lanesborough divested himself slowly of his hunting-gear, stopping from time to time to look at and turn over the letter-cover that lay beside him, and then stare out of the window at the damp cocks and hens in the stable. Presently he descended to the coffee-room, where he found the time-tables, and perused them in company with a red-haired man of doubtful complexion, who could not make it out at all, and swore a little, *sotto voce*.

'Where do you want to go to?' Lanesborough asked, when the red-haired man's objurgations became audible, and his rather well-shaped white hand had slipped from the top of the list to the very bottom, only to recommence the ascent.

'To Bosworth,' he replied. 'I want to get there without going to London, and these confounded trains always vanish when they get to Blank Junction.'

'There you are,' said Lanesborough, pointing to the place.

'Ah, that's it; thank you. Now, let me see. Gets there at 6:30; time to get there for dinner. Query how many miles?'

'Where to?' asked Lanesborough.

'To—what's its name—to the Rowley's place. I want to get there in time for dinner on the 25th. Do you know the distance?'

'No.' Lanesborough did not know

the distance. Lanesborough grew very concise in his replies; lost his own place in the train-bill, and finally went away and asked the waiter who that was in there with red whisksers.

'That was my Lord Tanton,' the waiter said; 'had been out on a roan mare yesterday; had had a tumble; was not much of a rider; was staying at Sir John Minton's hard by.' So much confided the waiter.

So he is asked, Lanesborough thought, and he went upstairs again, looked over some letters, and found one from Admiral Compton, inviting him for December, and a bill for boots; threw them both into the fire, and stuck the third envelope into the glass over the mantelpiece. 'Some hoax,' he said, half aloud—'some hoax.'

'Ben servire e non gradire—
Star in letto e non dormire
Aspettare e non venire
Son tre cose che fan morire.'

Particularly *Aspettare e non venire*, at least so thought Maud Rowley. At every sound on the gravel, at every ring of the bell, at every footstep she had started, not for one day or one hour only.

It was dinner-time now; the gong had sounded; they were all in the drawing-room waiting for the announcement of dinner and the arrival of that guest who had not come—neither come nor written to say why he was not coming. Certainly wanting in manners, if not in something more important.

'Perhaps he was not there; perhaps it never went.' 'But I saw it with my own eyes;' but there were five letters, not less, put in the post. But Lord Tanton had seen him at Barkham out hunting that very morning. No possible mistake, all agreed to decide. Maud said very little about it, but the nervous beating of the heart at every closing door made her feel quite sick, and the eligible young squire, who sat by her at dinner, thought her very stupid, and much too pale to be pretty. He might come to breakfast; ah, yes, that would be it! The door would be open just as they had begun, and there would be 'a thou-

sand apologies,' and then he would see her. Maud hid her face in her hands as she thought of that.

'We may as well go to covert,' Charles said, after breakfast; 'and if he comes you can send him after us to the ten-acre wood.'

After lunch, the ladies went out driving and walking—finally met the shooters, and saw the game spread out on the sweep.

He will be at home by the time we go in, Maud thought; and she put her cold fingers to her head to allay its aching. Still he did not come.

It was a very pleasant party. Everybody said so. They danced one night, and they played at 'curling.' The Misses Knowles were very well dressed and agreeable; the young squires very much impressed; Lord Tanton very 'affable'; Miss Rowley so nice, every one said.

Maud went into her mother's room about half-past six on the last day of the party. She was feverish and unwell; her head and her hands were so hot. In her room she had tried to stifle the unbearable restlessness by busy arrangement of her dress and trinkets; but it was in vain; blinding tears were beginning to threaten to overflow, and not only to scorch her eyelids, as they had done till now.

Lady Rowley was busy writing out bills of fare when Maud came in. The girl's heart sank. If she could have gone and hidden her face in her mother's lap, and wept and spoken about it! 'Mamma is always busy—always—always,' she said in her heart, and stood by the toilet-table.

'Mamma, may I have some eau de Cologne for my head?'

'Yes, dear; to be sure. Is it *le saumon*, or *la saumon*, Maud?'

'*Le saumon*, mamma, I think. Does any one come to dinner to-night?'

'The Fitzpatricks come; and a Mr. Pringle, who has been shooting. I suppose we must give up all hope of your Colonel Lanesborough, Maud. What do you think?' Lady Rowley said, beginning a new bill of fare.

'I suppose so, mamma. Perhaps

he was away somewhere, and will get the letter afterwards.'

'I thought he told Charlie he would be there on purpose?'

'I don't know, mamma,' Maud said, in a husky voice.

'I thought it would have been so nice for him to have come here,' Lady Rowley said, after a pause, in which she revolved sundry ways of evincing her sympathy and disappointment. 'He was very nice, was he not, Maud?'

'Yes, mamma.'

Poor Maud left the room. She could not say any more.

Poor dear Lady Rowley! It had certainly looked very like a son-in-law and a *trousseau*; but how could she care much about it, when Sir George was so very particular about the legibility of the *menu*. And, luckily, the acquaintance had been of such short duration, so little had been said about it, to Maud, there could be no very deep impression. What a pity Lord Tanton had such very red hair! Ah, there was a blot!

So the shooting party was over. The guests departed; and he had not come—neither had come nor written.

'Why did the fellow ask to be invited?' Charlie said. Charlie was emphatic on the subject when his sister was not present. 'If you do not put it into her head, she will never think again about it,' he decided, with that perception in matters feminine for which brothers are so justly famous.

Lady Rowley felt her conscience smite her. Had she not written to sundry aunts in terms so vaguely mysterious that they could create nothing less than a certainty in the said aunts' minds, and produce a shower of congratulations, now not quite acceptable?

Maud went to the gardener, and asked after the welfare of her bit of myrtle. 'Was it beginning to take root?'

The gardener was very sorry—begged pardon; but 'the boy,' to whom had been delivered certain pots to clean out had, with them, cleared out the sprig of myrtle—had thrown the contents of all the pots away—the myrtle was lost. The

gardener would give Miss Rowley every plant in the whole greenhouse—anything in the whole floral world, to compensate—he would, figuratively, flay alive the offending boy—the boy's life should henceforth be a burden to him, if only Miss Maud would forgive.

Maud grew very pale. 'No! don't scold the boy,' she said: 'he didn't know;' and then she walked away. 'If I had even the withered leaves!' her poor heart said. 'But when a thing is lost!'

It was horribly cold. The train had been crawling along, stopping at every station; and they gave no hot water on that line.

'When we get to Ely, will you ask for some hot water, Charlie?' Maud Rowley said, in a starved voice.

They were going into Norfolk on a Christmas visit, and the grievances of the Great Eastern were pressing heavily upon them.

'Train stops for ten minutes!' shouted the guard.

Out jumped Charlie. Maud hobbled out, too, on frozen feet; and after a desolate movement to and fro, in the way of the porter, she descried indications of hot coffee, and made her way to the buffet. She had petitioned for, and was on the point of obtaining a cup, when, at a little distance, with his back to her, she saw Arthur Lanesborough.

With his back to her. But she had caught a glimpse of his face. Besides, does one not know the back of some people? Charlie came up stamping, to warm his feet. 'Charlie,' she said, with trembling lips, 'look there!'

He did look, scowled a little, and turned away. 'Well!' he said. But she only scalded her mouth, and had no suggestion to offer.

When she had finished her cup, and saw her brother impatient and cross, she wrapped her cloak round her, and went back with him to the carriage.

Charles returned to the buffet, not quite decided what to say or do. Lanesborough was paying for his glass of ale, and started when he

saw who was close to him. He greeted him (so Charlie thought) somewhat stiffly. So, in return, Rowley merely said, 'How d'you do!' and walked away again.

'If he has any manners, he will say something about his non-appearance,' he thought, as he went slowly back to the train, and grew very angry when he reached it and found that he was not followed. He said nothing to his sister, but rolled himself into a human sausage with his rug, and was not specially gracious during the rest of the journey.

'Did I dream it all—was it all fancy?' she asked herself, very sick at heart.

The Norfolk visit was that most trying institution—a family gathering. Aunts and cousins of every size and hue met together *offices*—to be very fond of each other.

Maud, as one of the many, had hitherto only shone with a borrowed light, as a key to that hero Charles. Now, she took a rank of her own, becoming very soon aware, with tingling cheeks, of the sense of this her new importance. Had she not set up an admirer—a lover—a *fiancé*, perhaps. And with the sore smart of those days of waiting, of the unrecognized meeting at Ely still fresh—to parry the hints, the caresses, the significant sympathy of the relations, was very hard to do.

PART III.

A grandmother died. They were all in deep mourning. Charles set off to Corfu with some friends, the little governess went away, and Maud undertook to teach the small brother and sisters. It was a quiet winter, therefore, from all causes. In spring, too, they remained at home, not being London-going people at any time, nor Maud one whose wishes made themselves evident in the household.

Spring passed, and summer. Weary, with perfumed, silent days, and sweet, clear nights to one. Weary, tenfold, with dusty, clamorous days, and dizzy, heated nights to the other of those two, between whom a cool, wide stream of sepa-

ration was ever widening, voiceless, but irresistible.

The autumn came, clear and still, with golden fields and glittering skies. The children must have sea-bathing. Maud and her mother accompanied them to a new breezy watering-place, where there were few machines, and no parade at all. Maud bathed in the strong green waves, and breathed the salt air, and felt that the weight at her heart was only the heavier for the effort she made to throw it off. The splash of the water, the rush of the falling pebbles, his voice ever sounding—sounding in her heart, haunted her. And by night, when the choruses of the Welsh boatmen floated in the moonlit air under her window, something strange and chill crept round her heart, close and subtle as the grasp of the seaflower, that drags the swimmer down to death, in the cool northern seas.

One day, in the full noontide sunshine, the children and Maud sat on the shore building mud-pies, for which she supplied round pebbles as plums; Lady Rowley, with a letter, came slowly towards the group, reading to herself, and stopped close to them, still perusing and turning her letter over.

'A letter from Aunt Anne,' she said, at last, looking at the third page of it. 'There is a piece of news in it, Maud.'

'Read it, mamma,' Maud said; and her heart sprang up, she knew not why.

'Blanche Compton is to marry a colonel of the Guards—Colonel Lanesborough—he has six thousand a year, and will be Lord Langton in due time. They are all much pleased.' Lady Rowley paused an instant, and then read the end of the letter, and walked on. Maud made no remark; she sat quite still; and when the children found that she forgot to hand them stones, they helped themselves from the store on her lap.

Who so happy now as Mrs. Lytton? The happiest woman in the world she deemed herself; nor made it secret that she did so. The bride elect, the *fiancé*, the *trousseau*, the

whole concern, she took under her most special charge. Only one small circumstance afforded her dissatisfaction in the matter—namely, the determined silence on the part of Arthur Lanesborough, on a subject which the good lady longed fully to understand and to discuss. He would not be congratulated on having taken her advice; he would not say why; nor, indeed, whether he had ceased to admire Miss Rowley. He would not talk about it at all.

'I am going to be married to Blanche Compton, and I hope you will come to the wedding,' was the only announcement he made to his old friend; and though otherwise perfectly and admirably biddable by her, on that one subject he was obstinately reserved.

The wedding was to be in the end of October. In the beginning of the month, Lanesborough, having left the army, placed himself entirely at his bride's disposal, and was taken to a relation's house to be exhibited thereat, as well as at a county ball impending in the neighbourhood.

There was no proper ball-room at Bosworth—only the room where the assizes were held. Big enough, and with a good floor, but unlovely in its outward, or rather its inward appearance, and having for refreshment-room an apartment resembling a laundry in all save the wash-tubs. Much calico, pink paper, and ivy did what they could to distract, if not gratify, the eye in the ball-room; and the wooden judgment-seat was appropriated to the musicians. A crowd of shining waiters and damp-fingered damsels blocked the passages in all directions; bland, uneasy stewards had arrived; and the squeaking of the fiddles portended the opening of the ball.

'Shall you let me valse?' Blanche asked of her future lord, when one of their party begged for a galloppe.

'By all means; do anything you like.' And Blanche appealed to the company as to whether he was not an angel.

'How you sigh,' she said, as she sidled up the passage, on his arm

'Does it bore you so very much, you poor dear?'

'Did I sigh? Look here, I'll put your cloak in there for you.'

'No, darling, thanks. I want just to see whether my hair is straight, and to get a pin.'

So she went into the cloak-room; and he stood at the door of the ball-room, and had his toes trodden on by nervous old Bosworth ladies.

At the sound of some voices he turned round, and was face to face with Lady Rowley and her niece Emma—whom he did not know, and with Maud Rowley—whom he did know.

It was the niece's first ball; and she wrote in her journal next day that, amongst other delightful events, a gentleman, tall and handsome enough for a hero, had started, on seeing her, so violently that he had all but fallen down. Whence Miss Emma deduced a great appreciation of her own personal charms.

The first waltz struck up as they entered the room, and the rush of feet and blare of cornets and fiddles rendered no talking possible.

Maud sat down; the throbbing pain subsided. She could look round, and recognize the faces that she knew. 'He might have shaken hands at least,' she thought. 'I am not to lose his acquaintance altogether, am I?' A strange confusion of fancies bewildered her—a sense of being somehow in fault—the reawakening of all those sickening miseries that she had thought were stilled long since. Stilled: yes, borne down—buried; and flowers of fragrance and of tenderness planted on their grave—as she had bravely set herself to do—during these autumn months. Her cross it was to be—her thorny trial, drawing tears of blood, it might be, but purifying her heart from all too absorbing interests—teaching her by how little store to set a human love so lightly lost.

Showing her, her own too quick impulse, too easy belief, in what she wished for, poor child! she judged herself the more hardly, that her heart said nay, and bled at such hard judgment. Meek she must be, henceforth, and gentle, only the

more ready, with sympathy, to help the suffering, to forget herself. She had surely dreamt all the past—that winter's fancy had been but a mirage; fled now, and leaving only hot sand and stones behind.

So she had schooled herself, growing paler, perhaps, and thinner, with a depth of sadness in those sweet eyes—strange in one so young—but letting no outward sign escape her of the pain within.

People came and asked her to dance, Maud waltzed, and galloped, and quadrilled, and waltzed again. An ensign in the Compton party was much smitten, became introduced, and being granted the quadrille, 'after this dance' retired into a corner to worship in silence.

In the same corner Lanesborough was standing, excused from dancing on the plea of Blanche and a headache. The ensign poured his admiration into Lanesborough's ear, lamenting his own want of size, and her popularity.

'Any chance of a waltz, did he think?'

'Confound them! why don't they keep in the middle!' the Colonel exclaimed, savagely.

'I can't tell; you had better ask her yourself,' he replied to the ensign.

'Oh! how graceful she is—stunning!' pursued the youth, deplorably. 'She is like a swan, and all the others like waddling ducks.'

Lanesborough laughed so fiercely that the ensign did not think him good company, and left him to await elsewhere the blessed quadrille in store for him.

'You shall give me one turn, one little turn,' Blanche's voice said, close to her tall *fiancé*, when the dance was over, and the first bars of the 'Peri' floated on the heated air. She looked up with a glance half sharp, half coaxing into his face, and slipped her hand within his arm. 'You look so bored, you poor dear.'

'I have been using you ill; have a turn now with me.'

'A waltz,' he said, without looking at her—'too charmed;' and he set off before she was ready, so that her little toes could scarcely touch

the ground, and she had to cling to his shoulder.

Two whirls round the room, and then Blanche stopped him, and laughing, breathlessly, pulled him out of the circle of dancers. She stopped close to another couple, Maud Rowley and her big, sandy-haired partner, Jack Gordon.

'How do you do?' Blanche said, holding out a hand very cordially across Lanesborough's.

'How do you do?' said Maud, and then she shook hands with him also.

'Such a long time since we have met,' said Blanche.

'Yes a long time—almost a year.'

'You are quite well?'

'Quite well, thank you.'

'We are staying in your neighbourhood, I think.'

'You must come over to see all my pretty things.'

'Oh, thank you! you are at Barton, are not you?'

'Yes, such a dear old house.'

Jack Gordon saw a gap in the testotums before them, and told Maud that if 'she was ready, he was.' So they waltzed off, and Lanesborough took hold of Blanche's small waist, and whirled her off her feet, till the dance ended.

'Do you mind stopping,' Maud had said, and Gordon stopped instant, and piloted her out of the crowd.

She stood quite still, and held her fan so tightly, that the handle bruised her fingers; her heart was beating with loud, violent throbs, that shook her, and took away her breath; a strange weight held her eyelids, she could not raise her voice to ask for a seat, and she felt as though she must fall.

'Too hot, eh?' Gordon said, holding up his chin, and fanning himself with his handkerchief. 'Awfully hot, and they push so, these people; come and get some tea or something.'

'Wait, one minute,' she managed to say. He looked at her, but made no remark; till, touching his arm, she signified to him that he could move on.

'Awfully hot,' he repeated. When they reached the quasi laundry, he got a tumbler full of wine and water—particularly wine—and stood,

good-humoured and unobservant, while she drank it. He was a capital good fellow Gordon; utterly undiscerning—the best possible companion for a susceptible young lady; and being hungry and thirsty, he went to the supper-table, while Maud, with shaking cold limbs, and filmy vision, sat in her corner, and wondered what was the matter with her.

'All right again?' he asked, when he had eaten and drunk to his satisfaction. 'Eh? no—not quite, I see. Take some more stuff. No? well, salts then, smelling-bottle; don't faint, you know.' From a stout dame in pink satin he procured a fat bottle of benevolent outside, and pungent contents. 'There now—do you good, eh?' Gordon said, much pleased, when after a few faltering sniffs Maud looked a degree less white, a tinge of colour came, and a look of life in her eyes, and she was better.

'By Jove! I am engaged for this,' Jack exclaimed, perceiving that the 'Lancers' was going on; 'and there's the young woman, too.'

'Never mind me,' Maud begged, 'I will stay here; my partner can come for me, if he likes me; I am quite safe.'

'Oh! well, then, perhaps, do you know, I'd better go; she'll swear so, you see, if I don't appear.' He nodded confidentially to Maud, as he hurried off, and she stood by the door and looked at the dancers.

As she moved aside to let some people pass out of the supper-room, her dress was trodden on, and looking up to ask the culprit to remove his foot, she perceived that it was Lanesborough. He saw her at the same moment, and he apologised stiffly, and gave her a pin to repair the damage committed by his foot. She pinned the rent together, and said something about the crowd, and long dresses—something stupid enough; but that broke the ice, for she was resolved to speak to him. 'Are we not even to be friends—acquaintances,' she said in herself; 'have we quarrelled?' She looked at him when he turned to bring her an ice, and she saw that her first impression was just, that his face

was changed, hardened with deeper lines, and an expression in the eye that she had not seen when they had known each other last year.

They stood at the chimney-piece, a little behind the door.

'Are all the Miss Comptons here?' Maud asked.

'Yes; no—Emma is not here; only Annie and Blanche,' he added.

'Have you been hunting, yet?'

'I beg pardon.'

'Have you been out with the hounds, yet?'

'Hunting—oh!—I—no, not much, only once; it is too early, rather.'

'You have been going about, perhaps, travelling?'

'Yes, I think so; I've been abroad, at Spa.'

'Were you abroad last winter?'

'Last winter? no; I was in Lincolnshire—at Barkham.' His tone was unmistakable in its haughty surprise.

Maud's hand shook so that her spoon fell.

'I was not sure, I—' she looked up for an instant, and saw his face flush and his lip curl as he bent to pick up the fallen spoon.

'Has Blanche taught you to answer letters?' she asked, in what she meant to be a bantering tone; but her heart was in her throat.

'What do you mean, Miss Rowley?' he said, giving her back the spoon. 'I did not know I required teaching.'

Maud drew a long breath to gain courage. 'You never answered one that was written to you last winter,' she said. 'Mamma was horrified when you had never answered—she invited you in her own hand. I—I hope you are penitent.'

There was a moment's silence.

'I never got any letter from your mother. No invitation ever reached me,' he said.

Then she looked at him, and a chill ran through her veins—his eye fixed her with so strange a glance.

'I addressed it myself—I saw it go—it was to ask you for the 25th, last year,' she said.

'I never was invited for the 25th. No letter ever reached me from you.'

'I gave the envelope, myself, on the 19th; we waited, and waited—'

She stopped, just conscious of the wail in her voice, the wild pain in her eye, that was betraying her.

He grew very pale, and took hold of the mantelpiece with one hand.

'I never got it—I waited too; God knows I waited,' he said, bitterly. 'I never left the place—it never came.'

'Would you have come?' she asked, at last, in a husky voice, when they had stood silent a little while.

'Come! would I have come? I tell you, I thought of nothing else; you know I would have come.'

'I thought, perhaps,' she said, faltering, 'perhaps you had forgotten—you did not care.'

He laughed bitterly. 'When I went to bed I dreamt of you; when I awoke you were there. All day, all day, I was haunted. Do you think I could forget you? I tell you, to-night, when you came in to that room, I knew it was you before I had seen you or heard your voice. I felt it.'

She could not move, nor speak; she stood hearing as in a dream, while in a lower tone hurriedly he continued—

'I could not understand it. I met your brother somewhere, on the railway, one day, and his manner was so odd, I thought he meant to cut me. I saw there was something wrong. I thought it was a hint; and then I heard that there was some one—I was told so—some one approved of, that had been asked to the house. I considered myself dismissed.'

Maud shook her head mechanically, and then they stood silent, and in one long look read in each other's eyes the joy, unutterable, lost to them; the pain, unutterable, to come.

Too late! One echo more to those words that have been ringing through the world since the day that the angel stood at the gate of Eden with his flaming sword—too late! And to her woman's heart it came differently than to his, this knowledge; for mingled in her was relief intense from the pressure of a

long borne burden, with the new pain of a fresh wound. She had not suffered her love to grow as he had—to weave itself into sweet pictures in her mind. It had hardly put forth tender buds before they had been cut down—to be pressed between the leaves of forbidden memory. No hope lived in her to receive its deathblow; rather had a stone been lifted off the fountain, and the stream had not yet found how narrow and stony its new channel must be.

It was otherwise to him. He was a man, and he was fettered—that was what sounded in his ear and throbbed in his brain. Fettered—and the rivets to be closed by his own hand.

‘Oh, Miss Rowley!’ a voice said close to them, ‘I have had such a search; this is our dance, I think.’ The ensign, conscious in possession of a right, presented his arm.

He met a look he did not soon forget; but Maud did not answer.

Lanesborough said, ‘She is engaged to me,’ and the ensign saw her walk away, remaining himself rooted to the spot, with a bewildered sense of catastrophe.

It was all a dream. to Maud; she knew his arm was round her—she must have fallen else; and dreamlike the notes of the valse wove themselves with the measured cadence of their footsteps into her misery and his. Never to be disentangled from it, those sad, sweet notes, now joyous, now tearful; but ever in floating measured time, that like the tide waves on the shore, rose and fell unchanging—to them are agony—to all the rest a valse.

They had stopped, and were standing by a window, when Lady Rowley came up with her niece. She was a little fussy, not quite cross, but nearly so. ‘Where had Maud been? the carriage was waiting; it was very late; she must come at once.’ Lady Rowley bestowed a look, half irate, at the tall partner, whom she judged to be some flirting officer, subversive of punctuality and good manners.

‘I will get your cloak, and you must follow,’ she said, and Maud tried to obey.

‘Not yet,’ he said, and his breath came with a sort of shudder.

‘I must go,’ she said presently; ‘it is better to go at once.’

‘Stop,—’ his voice was so parched she could hardly hear it. ‘I have something to say to you;’ but he stopped, and the words were never said.

She drew him with her out of the room; Lady Rowley cloaked and impatient gave her her bournous; Maud put it on herself twice; he had let it fall; and then they stood one moment near each other in the dark, cold portico.

A link-boy yelled himself hoarse in behalf of the carriage, and old Sir Henry Wynn, the steward, was in a state of ferocious politeness, because theirs was before his brougham.

‘Oh, no! let him have the pleasure—charming.’

‘Well, pray—’

‘Oh, no! not at all.’

He thrust Lady Rowley’s petticoats in after her, and almost shut the door without waiting for Maud.

‘One minute, Sir Henry!’ Lady Rowley exclaimed, laughing. ‘My daughter is left behind.’

‘Ten thousand pardons, I’m sure. Charming ball, was it not? I will take care of your dress. Good night,’ and he shut them in with a bang, and told the coachman to drive on.

Maud leant her head on the window. Poor Maud! The night wind touched her brow gently, and stirred her hair. It could not cool the burning pain within; but it felt like the tender touch of love. That love that had spoken through his voice to her very soul, that had seemed twin with her very being, now that it must be torn, riven, from her. The others slept. Lady Rowley snored a little; Emma, the niece, dreamt confusedly, kicked off her shoes, and apologised half awake to Maud, who did not hear her. Her thoughts were in a throbbing chaos that would assume no form, not even that of misery. ‘Where was it, that letter he had never received, where, where can it be?’ she muttered. ‘Oh, patience! wait, wait, surely one hour more—only one hour.’ A sob rose in her throat; its





"An hour after she was still there, standing quiet and cold, with the flickering pale light of the taper on her face, for she had found the letter."

Drawn by S. A.

See the "Blank Envelope—a Story."

sound roused her to the self-control she had nearly lost; and she sat up, closing her eyes, and then opening them in the strained agony of impatience, 'Oh, when should they arrive!'

At last—

The mother and cousin lit their candles. Yawning with half-closed eyes, they bade each other good night, kissed Maud's cold cheek, and went up stairs. When they were gone, Maud turned back, pushed open the baize door that led to the sitting-room, and went in, through the dark drawing-room into the little room beyond; where, as if it had been yesterday, she remembered her mother sitting at the table, and herself standing by her, and laying the envelope ready stamped and directed beside the blotting-book. All flashed across her memory, as she made her way by the dim light of her taper up to the writing-table. Her hand, her limbs shook convulsively as she put down the light and took hold of the writing-book.

An hour after she was still there, standing quiet and cold, with the flickering pale light of the taper on her face, for she had found the letter. It lay, as it had lain long, between two leaves of blotting-paper, folded, dated, neatly—all ready to be put in its cover.

She had found, first, another folded paper—the long missed receipt she had brought to her mother that same morning, and then some bills, and then the letter; and she had read it through, and then remained standing, quietly, scarcely conscious of herself. The candle sunk at last into the socket, and went out, and then she raised her head, and drew breath in a long shudder. She groped her way out of the room, found a spark of light still in the passage lamp, and reached her room.

She did not sit up in her crushed ball-dress like a heroine; she struck a lucifer, lit a candle, undressed, and went to bed. But alone in long dark hours she lay, and did battle with her misery; and her broken fate was borne bravely back, though with a fainting, dying, strength, from crushing her.

She conquered. For when the day broke, and the dim cold light of a winter morning stole into the room, she rose, and destroyed the letter, so that she might never look at it again—so that her mother might never know that *her* hand it had been that had let slip the thread of her daughter's life.

Post scriptum.

There is nothing more to tell.

Blanche Compton's marriage to Colonel Lanesborough took place on the day appointed, and there were 'no cards.'

Catastrophes are improbable, not to say impossible now-a-days. When one's bride elect has had twelve ink-stands and ten paper-knives presented to her by her dearest friends, and has bought no end of fine clothes for a *trousseau* one cannot say that one has made a little mistake, and that one would rather marry some one else.

Nobody runs away—it is bad style. People learn to arrange any little mistakes of that sort very nicely; nothing is known out of their own laundry of the state of the household linen; and Mrs. Lyster told everybody that 'It was the luckiest thing in the world that her dear colonel had got a wife to take care of him. How ill he looked; all the effects, of that horrid Crimean fever; and was it not a pity Miss Rowley's good looks should have lasted so short a time—she had promised to be so pretty!'



THE PLAYGROUNDS OF EUROPE :

The Southern Slope of the Alps.

HOLIDAY time is come, or coming. Your thoughts begin to wander from everyday matters, and are running on maps, guide-books, and carpet-bags. You invest money in travelling knickknacks, instinctively as it were, without any definite purpose. Your eyes keep peering towards divers points of the compass; and you don't want an idle but an active holiday; for your time, you think, is hardly yet come to join the fogies of Bath or the dowagers of Cheltenham.

Shall you take holiday in Wales? Well, Wales is pretty, though small; but the clouds are for ever dropping rain. On one or two favoured spots (perhaps on many) it rains every day in the year. Another defect in Welsh scenery is, that often and often, when you have a fine view before you, you turn round, and behold nothing at all! Nevertheless, the waterfalls (Dolgelly, for instance) are exquisite, not merely from the copious allowance of fluid, but because they tumble down what Virgil calls *vivo sedilia saxo*—shelves cut out of the living rock. It is a rush of white foam down a broad flight of steps. Snowdon, too, is fine and panoramic; and up Cader Idris is a nice little walk for young ladies and gentlemen of tender years. Boiled ducks are so capital an Anglesea dish that you try to reproduce it after your return—and fail, if you have not found out their secret. Still, on reflection, you leave the land of Taffes, goats, and leeks to stand over till a more convenient season. It is not adventurous enough, nor cheap enough, although a pleasant beat for commercial travellers.

In Scotland? Ah! Scotland merits serious consideration. The mountains round the maritime lochs, rising from the level of the sea, display every inch of their stature. The inland lochs are not too large, yet quite large enough to be imposing. Whether sprinkled with

islets or girt with granite they are lovely in all their differences. Scotch landscapes are models of artistic composition. They are studies which show the painter how to put his elements together to the best advantage. If Edinburgh had only the climate of Naples, what, I pray, would be the name of the most picturesque capital in Europe? Scotch air gives the appetite Scotch fare deserves. But a tour in Scotland now costs dear. Besides, you want to get abroad, as a still greater novelty, and also to air your French and German if you happen to be possessed of a sprinkling of either.

Abroad, therefore, you decide to go. To the Rhine, or the German baths? No; you want mountains, not hills. Try then, for this once, the southern slope of the Alps. The mere expectation of making the excursion is an inducement to the study of three important modern languages. Knowledge, generally, is power; a special knowledge of languages is economy and freedom to roam. Our countrymen, indeed, are irresistible and incompressible travellers; they burst forth, and are explosively scattered over the Continent, in spite of infirmity, age, and ignorance of language. They often fancy that foreigners are merely deaf, and that by speaking English loudly they will be understood. They do get understood, sometimes, providentially.

Observe, in your mind's eye, that cheery old gentleman and his amiable fourteen-year-old son, as they hastily enter a restaurant at Dijon. 'Coffee' is the same in all languages, so he easily gets his cup of café, or coffee. By pointing to the brandy decanter, rather than by shouting 'Glass!' he is in possession of a glass of brandy. But canny Glasgow is his home, and toddy his native drink—his mother's milk. So he calls for 'Water!' and taps and coaxes the coffee-pot to intimate that the water is to be hot. He might have gone on tapping all

night long; but his guardian angel, through the agency of a voice from a corner, intimates to the lady presiding at the bar what it is the gentleman wants. The Caledonian nectar is brewed, and the grateful drinker informs his interpreter that he is off, that night, by express to Lyons; thence to Geneva and to Berne; perhaps to Genoa. He has no time to excursionize amongst the hills and valleys—only five weeks to do it all; and, certainly, down the Rhine.

‘But why hurry away from Switzerland and Northern Italy to waste time in seeing the Rhine? There is no occasion for you to travel there for scenery, if you are going to Berne and to Genoa.’

‘Ah! But I want to say I have seen it.’

Fortune may favour the brave traveller; and does. There is a legend of an Englishman—one of the Smiths—who explored the whole of German Switzerland with no more extensive vocabulary than ‘Bett’—bed; and ‘Brot’—bread. Therefore, my reader, let nothing discourage you. Plain English will often serve good stead. Still, for those who are fond of rambling, it is better to have a stock of the necessities of life, in French words, and also in Italian and German.

The Pyrenees, indeed, are tempting, especially as they call for no other language but French; but they are less lofty than the Alps, the area they cover is less extensive, their distance from England is greater, they are a chain, and not a group of mountains. But were they equal in all other respects, one special feature alone would confer on the latter a decided superiority. The Spanish side of the Pyrenees—their southern slope—which one would expect to find adorned with almost tropical luxuriance, is naked, sterile, and uninviting, whilst the corresponding portion of the Alps is all that is verdant, rich, and lovely. I don’t say that the roads are not now and then dusty; it is difficult to have months of sunshine without some dust; but, in spite of this and one or two other small drawbacks, the Swiss-Italian lakes and valleys

are an earthly paradise, an Eden of foliage and fruit, which must be seen to be appreciated.

The southern slope of the Alps should be reserved for a second holiday amongst the hills. There is more than enough to occupy the first in rambling over the Jura, the Lake of Lucerne district, and the Bernese Oberland or Upperland. Indeed, the whole of Northern Switzerland is really upperland in comparison with the southern cantons. The ascent to cross the Alps from the northern side is strikingly less considerable than the descent into Italy. In going down, you keep making a succession of plunges, each of which opens to you a novel region.

At the highest point you are in a treeless land, amidst barren peaks, stunted herbage, and cutting winds. Your driver puts the drag to his wheel, and sets off at a trot. You soon come to a few dwarf, weather-beaten firs; the sparse and wretched firs increase to a forest; the air is simply fresh and bracing. You plunge again; oaks, elms, apple, and cherry trees appear. Another plunge brings you to the region of chestnuts; you begin to think there can be no further descent, when, lo! before you opens a purple hollow, into which you see at once that you must plunge again, which you do forthwith, still trotting down-hill with the drag on, between festooned vines, mulberry and fig trees, and a temperature which effectually illustrates the fable of the North Wind and the Sun, making you successively doff your overcoat, cravat, and waistcoat. And you have still several further dips to make before reaching the grand level of Piedmont and Lombardy.

It is this interminable descent which renders walking down the Alps so much longer an affair than walking up them; and even determined pedestrians will often take to the diligence to get over the ground more rapidly. But if you are in no particular hurry to avail yourself of vehicular assistance a satisfactory bargain with a return carriage may often be made.

All the passes of the Alps are so

beautiful that they all, without exception, deserve to be seen. At least one holiday will be well devoted to crossing and re-crossing them from one side to the other, keeping as much on the Italian side as you can.

Thus, supposing you begin at the western end, the railway will take you, *via* Chambery, to St. Jean de Maurienne, where it stops until the grand tunnel is completed. Thence you can cross Mont Cenis by diligence, hired carriage, or on foot, to Susa. From Susa the rail will take you to Turin. Proceed thence to Aosta, as you can or as you please, and walk over the Great St. Bernard to Martigny. The rail will take you up the Valais part of the way to Brieg, whence you may walk or ride over the Simplon (a magnificent pass) to Domo D'Ossola. From Domo D'Ossola you can easily reach either the Lago d'Orta, the Lago Maggiore, or both. On the latter, steamers will take you to the Beautiful Islands, and afterwards to Locarno (where the dome of the cathedral fell in from the weight of the snow, and buried ever so many people alive, the winter before last). From Locarno to Bellinzona; from Bellinzona to Lugarno, over Monte Cenere. The Lake of Lugarno is preferred by Topffer (an accomplished painter as well as author) to the famous Lake of Como. It is both grand and delicious. See it well from one end to the other, and beg somebody to fire a cannon, to let you hear the echoes. From Lugarno ascend Monte Salvador on foot, and then return to Bellinzona. From Bellinzona follow the Val Leventina, resting and refreshing at Faido and Airole, where are excellent inns. Cross the St. Gothard; descend to Amsteg, Altorf, and Flüelen, where you will find a steamer which will take you to Lucerne, after having accomplished as nice a little zigzag trip as the heart of man or woman can wish.

But to do all this in a moderate space of time you must reach your starting-point rapidly. The high railway road between Paris and the South is so chopped up into short bits by small stations that it makes

a great difference of time—not so much of cash expended—whether you clear the distance by express or by ordinary omnibus trains. Continental railway distances, and their cost, must be estimated not as the crow flies, nor even as the carriage-road runs, but by the length of iron-path, often tortuous, which you have to traverse between two places. Thus, you can post from Paris to Geneva by a shorter route than you can from Paris to Chambery; but it costs more to go to Geneva by rail; for the reason that, in both cases, you have to go to Culoz, whence to Chambery is a short, direct sweep of the line; but from thence to Geneva it has to retrograde and turn about, to humour the hard-hearted rocks and obstructive hills which make the Rhone alter his course at their pleasure. Sometimes the zigzags of continental railways are so great and absurd as to tempt the tourist to leave them and drive across country from point to point. To go from Calais, which is on the coast, to Dunkerque, which is also on the coast, there being no direct rail between the two, you must run far into the interior to Hazebrouck (please look at your map), there change train, and rush back to the shores of the North Sea again. And you pay for the whole distance performed exactly as if you had gone on straight southwards. It is such a wasteful throwing of your money into the pockets of the company, that you are tempted indignantly to take a trap to convey you by road *via* Gravelines.

If you walk any of your zigzags, you will have to be provided with a few small necessities. Don't make the mistake of wearing a light straw hat because you are going to be exposed to sun-heat, but a thick felt one, thickly lined, and impervious to calorific radiation, for the same reason that Turks and Arabs wear turbans. Your umbrella will prove a very treasure. In a side pocket of my little bag I always carry a store of little utilities which weigh nothing and take still less room; viz., a few stout needles ready threaded with black and with grey thread (not cotton); a tailor's

thimble; a few buttons of the sorts most used; a metal box with lucifers; a candle's end; two or three yards of twine; a pair of leather shoestrings; a widgeon's or other small duck's wing, to brush off dust before entering a village or hotel; an ounce of Epsom salts, to be replaced if, and as soon as taken; a phial of pills of sulphate of quinine; a bottle, the size of your little finger, filled with essential oil of lavender [If you have to occupy a bed suspected to be haunted, drop five drops of the oil between the sheets, one in the middle, and one towards each corner, and it will drive away intruders for a couple of nights]; a 'Times' newspaper, to wrap up sandwiches, botanical specimens, &c.; a few visiting cards; the envelopes of two or three letters addressed to self, and an old passport to establish identity in case of need. No passport is required now for France or Switzerland. If you intend entering Austria you must have one ready in due form.

In walking, begin slowly, increasing the pace afterwards, if so inclined. Good guides have almost always to moderate the first efforts of candidates for pedestrian success. Beedeke's (of the 'Guide Book') rule is to set from sixty to seventy steps per minute up steep ascents, and from ninety to one hundred on level ground or down smooth descents. It is surprising how far slow continuous walking will take you in a quarter of a day. Walkers of this class, who scarcely seem to stir, will, in the end, leave 'splendid starters' behind them. Measure your progress not by the distance which remains to be accomplished, but by that already traversed. While climbing, look for encouragement behind and below you, rather than before and above you. 'Excelsior' is ever your motto, but carried out humbly and perseveringly. If you have entered into partnership with a travelling companion whose pace is faster than your own, before starting make a strict stipulation that he shall conform to your pace. You are journeying on foot, not racing. When fatigue begins, pleasure ends, and nothing tends to weariness

sooner than incessant straining to follow a faster walker. If he will not go softly, 'as agreed, let him 'gang his ain gate' and pursue his further course alone. The sufferings of army stragglers, in this respect, amount to torture.

Pedestrian tours and ascents of second-class altitudes 'sound' greater feats than they really are, because the time occupied is carefully noted, and the points of departure and arrival specified; but many a sportsman does as much or more without thinking he has performed anything extraordinary. Grouse and snipe have led many a man a dance, over the moor and through the marsh, quite equal to an average Alpine day. I mention this to encourage novices and prevent their being frightened by the mere names of acclivities known to be non-dangerous. (Pardon the word.) Faint heart never won fair mountain; therefore dare to look a hill-top boldly in the face. At the end of your walk treat yourself as if you were a horse; don't put yourself into the stable at once, if heated, but after a short repose take a turn or two; lead yourself about the court-yard, the garden, or the dining-room, to prevent the stiffness which might result from sudden rest.

As to company, two is the very best travelling number. It is good not to be quite alone in case of accident, even if the accident be no worse than a fly in your eye. Three is not bad, especially if two of the three (as two sisters) can occupy the same bed-room. The coupé of a diligence—a pleasant place—holds three. Four do well together under many circumstances, particularly if two rooms suffice. Four exactly fill a hired calèche (such as you would cross the Alps in by the carriage roads), dividing the expense conveniently. Five is a very awkward figure. After four, it is not 'The more the merrier,' but 'the melancholier;' a fifth person is almost always one too many. But it is far better to be alone than to travel in uncongenial, capricious, exacting, selfish, or uncertain-tempered company. The choice of one's travelling associates requires great caution and

consideration ; for many and many have started friends who have returned quite the contrary.

If your party be numerous, another precaution will have to be attended to.

Somebody has called Interlaken a great hotel with a road running through it ; but all Switzerland is virtually an hotel, with roads, foot-paths, and sometimes no path at all, running through it. Frequently, on your arrival, you find every apartment in your wing of that 'hotel' occupied. In full season, in fine weather, when the grand tide of travellers, composed of all peoples, nations, and languages, rushes, like an overflowing stream, from town to town, from isolated hotel to picturesque site, the uncertainty and worry of procuring accommodation greatly detract from the pleasure of the tour. It becomes a race, a wrestling-match who shall get first and secure a sleeping-place ; it is a struggle, if not for life, at least for lodging. Supposing your itinerary to be laid out beforehand, it is a good plan to write to the master of the hotel where you are going, to engage what you want. If there is not time to write, telegraph, which you can cheaply do. Within the limits of Switzerland a telegram of twenty words costs one franc ; of from twenty-one to fifty words, two francs ; of from fifty-one to a hundred words, three francs. Telegrams may be given into the charge of every post-office. If that post-office is not also a telegraph office, it is bound to transmit the telegram to the nearest telegraph-office without delay. For so slight an expense it is not worth risking having to sleep no one knows where. In no country is electricity more utilized than in Switzerland. In the federal palace at Berne there are electric clocks in all the principal rooms. The bells are upon an ingenious electrical plan. A handle placed in the wall of each room, by being pushed any number of times, gives the same number of strokes to a bell in the messenger's room ; and as each room has its number, he immediately knows where his services are required.

But before you can write or telegraph, you must first decide to what hotel you intend going ; therefore, to help travellers, I spoke last month, and shall speak again, of creature comforts as I found them. The reader must have perused many narratives—both fiction and professed reality—in which the personages appear entirely to dispense with the three articles of food, drink, and money. Not the slightest allusion is ever made to their needing support by victuals, what those victuals cost, how payment was made, nor in what shape the means of payment were carried about. Refreshments and a circulating medium were superfluities not worth a thought. Our record is more practical, having purposely given meals and prices, for the information of those likely to follow in our steps. If the reader can live on air, and make a repast off the morning breeze ; if he can sleep like a bird on the branch of a tree, he may skip such particulars as irrelevant. I cannot.

As to cash and its conveyance : The most convenient money to carry during a ramble in central Europe is French gold, *i. e.*, napoleons, twenty-franc pieces. Ten-franc pieces are inconveniently small, and troublesome to count ; politely decline them, therefore, if offered by the banker.

Suppose I start with 1000 francs (40*l.*)—not necessarily meaning to spend it all. I seal it in separate little packets of 100 francs each, which I carry in a small linen bag tied with tape, in the same pocket as my *porte-monnaie*. Whenever the *porte-monnaie* waxes light, I transfer to it, from the treasury bag, one hundred francs at a time. In the bag is a scrap of paper, inscribed—

'Started, August 1, with 1000 francs.

'Took, August 1, 100*l.*

" " 4, 100*l.*

" " 8, 100*l.*

and so on ; balancing the account, at last, with 'Brought back, so much.'

Cash accounts were not so easy

in my hot youth, when never mind who was king! It is now some dozen years ago that the Swiss effected a grand monetary reform, abolishing the awful confusion of small coin which then reigned paramount (each canton having its own small moneys, differing in size, stamp, name, and value: the learning our multiplication-table is a pleasing recreation compared with the mastering of the old Swiss coinage), and adopting throughout the Confederation the French system of francs consisting of a hundred centimes. Swiss francs are the same as French and Sardinian in principle and general appearance—silver coins less than our shilling. Not so the divisions of the franc,—excepting the silver half-franc. France has copper sous (five centimes) and copper two-sous pieces (ten centimes), which will not pass in Switzerland. The word 'sou' is rarely or never heard there; Switzerland has abolished 'coppers,' and adopted centimes in markets and all daily dealings, with practical sincerity. What would be pence and halfpence with us, are represented by small pieces of brass or base money, silvered or white-metalled over, legibly stamped 'Helvetia' on one side, and five, ten, or twenty centimes on the other.

These little counters are light and convenient change to carry, much more so even than the present sous of France; nor is it hard to reckon that five twenty-centimes pieces make a franc; that one twenty-centimes piece, two ten-centimes pieces, and two five-centimes pieces make half a franc. The only objection to them is that, in the dark or in a hurried payment, the base-metal change may be mistaken and confused with silver coin. But they *feel* different, more smooth and greasy, and with a little use may be recognized by the touch. Although we have not yet got as far as centimes in England, still, having gone so far as to reform our 'coppers,' it is worth consideration whether something similar might not prove useful here. Till you have tried it, you have no idea what a luxury it is

to be rid of a ponderous pocketful of browns. Immediately we give up the principle (as we have given it up in imitation of the French) that a penny-piece must weigh a pennyworth of copper, we open the door to the adoption of any kind of counter, even of small composite metal coin, which may have the recommendation of convenience. By procuring French gold either at Calais, Boulogne, or Paris, the traveller will receive the full benefit of the exchange in his favour. In any decent inn in Switzerland, English gold, and in most towns Bank of England notes, can be exchanged; but the bearer must be content to receive the conventional value of twenty-five francs to the sovereign, without the additional centimes to which the state of the money-market mostly entitles him. In short, an innkeeper will not be a banker, unless it turns to his own advantage.

Make sure that you are taken to the inn you intend, and are not kidnapped by some other innkeeper, which will occasionally occur if you don't look sharp. Above all, take care to know *where* you are taken.

Arriving at Berne, by rail, with my children, one evening, after dark, I found myself the object of great civility on the part of a railway conductor. To what inn was I going? He would put us in the way of it.

We were going to the 'Pension Herter,' otherwise 'Hôtel du Singe.' He did put us into an omnibus (of which we were the sole occupants), and gave strictly confidential directions to the driver. Where we were set down, we entered. I told the Roman-nosed head-waiter (*sommelier* you must call him, not *garçon*) that we had been recommended to the house by a gentleman (naming him) connected with one of the embassies. Blandly smirking and bowing, he replied that he perfectly knew that gentleman.

We went to bed; not I to slumber. My room, though vast, was filled with a close and frowsy atmosphere. In short it was inhabited by insect Macbeths, sleep's murderers. Patience carried me until daylight; the first thing I saw was one of my assassins crawling up the

wall. My resolution was taken. Let the young people sleep on, if they can: but after breakfast, change of hotel.

So, after an early stroll in and about Berne, I returned, as I thought, to the inn whence I came. Over the door, 'Hôtel du Singe, Pension Herter.' Walk in; ramble over the house; recognize nothing. 'Is this the Pension Herter?' I ask.

'Most certainly, sir,' is replied with a smile.

'No, it cannot be; you must be mistaken. This is not where I was brought last night. The rooms and everything are changed.'

'Ah! we are often served that trick. They drove you to a different inn to that you ordered.'

The explanation was clear as day. But *where* had I been driven to? I rushed into the street to look. All I knew was that it was under an arcade. But as nearly all Berne is built with arcades, you can't tell the entrance of one house from that of another. Here was a mess! Lost my luggage! Lost my girls! A cold sw—perspiration came over me. The only way I could see to get out of it, was to take a policeman and search every inn in Berne till I fell upon the right one.

In the midst of these pleasant cogitations, I noticed a remarkable Roman nose peering out from one of the arches, and voluptuously sniffing the morning air. It was a landmark, a beacon, though it did not blaze like Bardolph's. I did not lose sight of that nasal finger-post until it had guided me through the entrance passage, up the staircase, into the dining-room, where a lasonic dialogue ensued.

'Breakfast, and the bill.'

'I thought monsieur meant to stay three days at Berne.'

'I do; but—not here.'

He had his revenge. Exclusive of the breakfast, a cold fowl the size of a pigeon was charged three francs, three eggs seventy-five centimes. But didn't I enjoy my night's rest at the Pension Herter!

Another to-and-fro between cisalpine and transalpine sites: from Paris to Vesoul, where the 'Hôtel du Commerce' has only one fault—its

orthography. After deep thought for a day and a night, I guessed that 'honmenibuce,' in my bill might mean 'omnibus.' But middle-class French folk are not strong in spelling, mostly employing a redundancy of characters—witness the house-painter who, being paid by the letter, spelt 'Epicier,' over a grocer's door, with two p's, two c's, and a t at the end. To Bâle, Couronne, good view on the Rhine, not dear. To Zurich, by rail, with a branch to the falls of Schaffhausen, if you like. To Rapperschwyl by steamer. To Coire by rail; Steinbock Hotel. To the village of Splügen as you can; perhaps on foot from Tisus through the Via Mala—a mountain split in two with a road running inside the crack. Down the Splügen pass to the Lake of Como, whence to the Lake of Lugano. Thence to Bellinzona, over the St. Gothard, to Lucerne.

A longer zigzag, but very charming, may be made by descending the Tyrol, from Innspruck to Verona, making a branch to Venice, and returning by any more western pass which tempts you most.

With all their great variety is combined a certain great similarity. The rivers, for instance, and their tributaries which descend the sub-alpine valleys, do so by a succession of leaps which, whether great or small, form charming waterfalls. One of these, perhaps, called forth Prince Metternich's speech:

'Pray, gentlemen, join me in admiring this cascade. Its origin is in the clouds, and it is older than the House of Hapsburg. Without any assistance, it makes more noise than either Alexander the Great or Napoleon. It is admired and feared by all around; for it ravages, upsets, destroys, and kills. An army of enemies could do no more. At the first ray of sunshine it displays a gala coat, an orange scarf, a red and blue cordon. Have Field Marshals or Chamberlains better finery? And not a bit of rest, gentlemen! Even in the night, when it is absolutely alone and has nobody on earth to behold it, it works, it foams, perspires, and groans. Take a good look at it, gentlemen, while flaunt-

ing its diamonds and decorations. It casts its pearls before the passer-by; it scatters gentle dew over the flowrets. It is grand; it is tender, solemn, and beautiful. It is all that and more, and yet has not the slightest touch of vanity!

So saying, M. de Metternich took off his hat to the cascade and stepped into his carriage, heartily enjoying the very fine things which he had addressed to the gentlemen his followers.

Steam will carry you only a portion of the way towards the southern slopes of the Alps, stopping short respectively at the foot of Mount Cenis and of the Simplon, at the Lake of Lucerne, and at Coire. You will avail yourself of it as far as you can.

Swiss railway stations are more free and easy in their ways than French stations. All luggage not taken with you in the carriage is paid for, according to weight, which causes the carriages themselves to be often a little encumbered with baggage. But then the carriages are roomy; they are *saloons* entered by a door at each end, with a little landing, and little steps leading down to the platform. Consequently, the conductor can walk *inside* the carriages from one end of a train to the other. This arrangement, and the publicity it insures, prevents the possibility of the railway murders, assaults, and insults which occasionally occur in carriages with small compartments. It also gives to a railway train, externally, the appearance of a procession of hearses. Internally, each carriage would make a capital small chapel; you have only to mask one of the doors with a reading-desk or pulpit, and the thing is done. The arrangement by which the first and second-class seats are enabled to face either way, is very convenient and comfortable.

And so, gentle reader, *bon voyage!*

If you are possessed of any little social accomplishment; if you can sing a bearable song, or play a waltz or set of quadrilles on the piano; if you ventriloquize or do legerdemain; if you are up to fortune-telling, whether by the lines of the hand or the bumps of the cranium; polish up such acquirements bright before you start. Let not your talents be hidden under a bushel of rust and disuse. Remember how far poor Goldsmith's flute carried him. Your artistic proficiency may not do so much for you, nor be required to do it; but it will prove a valuable resource up amongst the mountains, when wind and rain confine you for the day, in company with a herd of fellow-prisoners all wondering how the day is to be got through.

As for me, your scribe and humble servant, my knapsack is very speedily packed, my bundle made. Over there, in that direction, although I see them not with bodily eyes, glaciers are sparkling, the hill sides are carpeted with strange wild flowers, vine-clad slopes stretch to meet waters of deepest blue, tall peaks rise mantled with purest snow, all inviting us to return to them. The call is irresistible.

We obey you, long-lived, though not everlasting giants! But, say certain unhappy men, the Alps are worn out, used up! The Alps used up! Is the sea used up? Is Spring used up? Are youth, health, and cheerfulness used up? No.—You, the Alps, the Titans of Europe, have patiently waited more than five thousand years—some say more than fifty times five thousand—to receive the visits of poor little unborn microscopic me. Now that we are come into the world at last, it would be great unpoliteness to balk your expectations. We are at your service. We go to lay our homage at your feet.

E. S. D.



CRICKET LEGISLATION.

PART I.

THE following is the heading of the earliest copy of the Laws of Cricket that can be found at the present time:—

THE LAWS OF CRICKET,

REVISED AT THE STAR AND GARTER, PALI-MALL, FEBRUARY 25, 1774,

By a Committee of Noblemen and Gentlemen of Kent, Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex, Middlesex, and London.

COMMITTEE:

In the Chair—Sir William Draper. *Present*—His Grace the Duke of Dorset, Right Honourable Earl Tankerville, Sir Horace Mann, Philip Dehany, John Brewer Davis, Harry Peckham, Francis Vincent, John Cooke, Charles Coles, Richard James, Esquires, Rev. Charles Pawlet.

The advocates of a Cricket Parliament have here no doubt a precedent: they may point to a council of representatives from all the recognized cricketing counties, met for the despatch of public business. Then why not meet again annually? Simply because there is nothing left to do—nothing, at least, has there been in our memory which could furnish a reasonable subject for any long-winded discussions. No. Whether the question be that of ‘high delivery,’ or of ‘leg before wicket,’ all that can be said is that Mr. White thinks this, and Mr. Black thinks that; the reasons (if any) of each party being very well known to the other. But men who meet, big with their own importance, and proud of their first ‘suit of little brief authority,’ if they find nothing to settle, will find something to unsettle; so jaw, jar, and discord will be the order of the day. As to harmonizing fixtures and programmes of matches, ‘in the name of the Prophet, Figs!’ a committee of the whole house will not settle such things by doomsday. And if, as we hear, bills of pains and penalties against offending professionals are to be proposed, we have only to say that the understanding between the players and the gentlemen has been generally so delightful, that we should be very sorry to read in our statute-books the possibility of a stray exception.

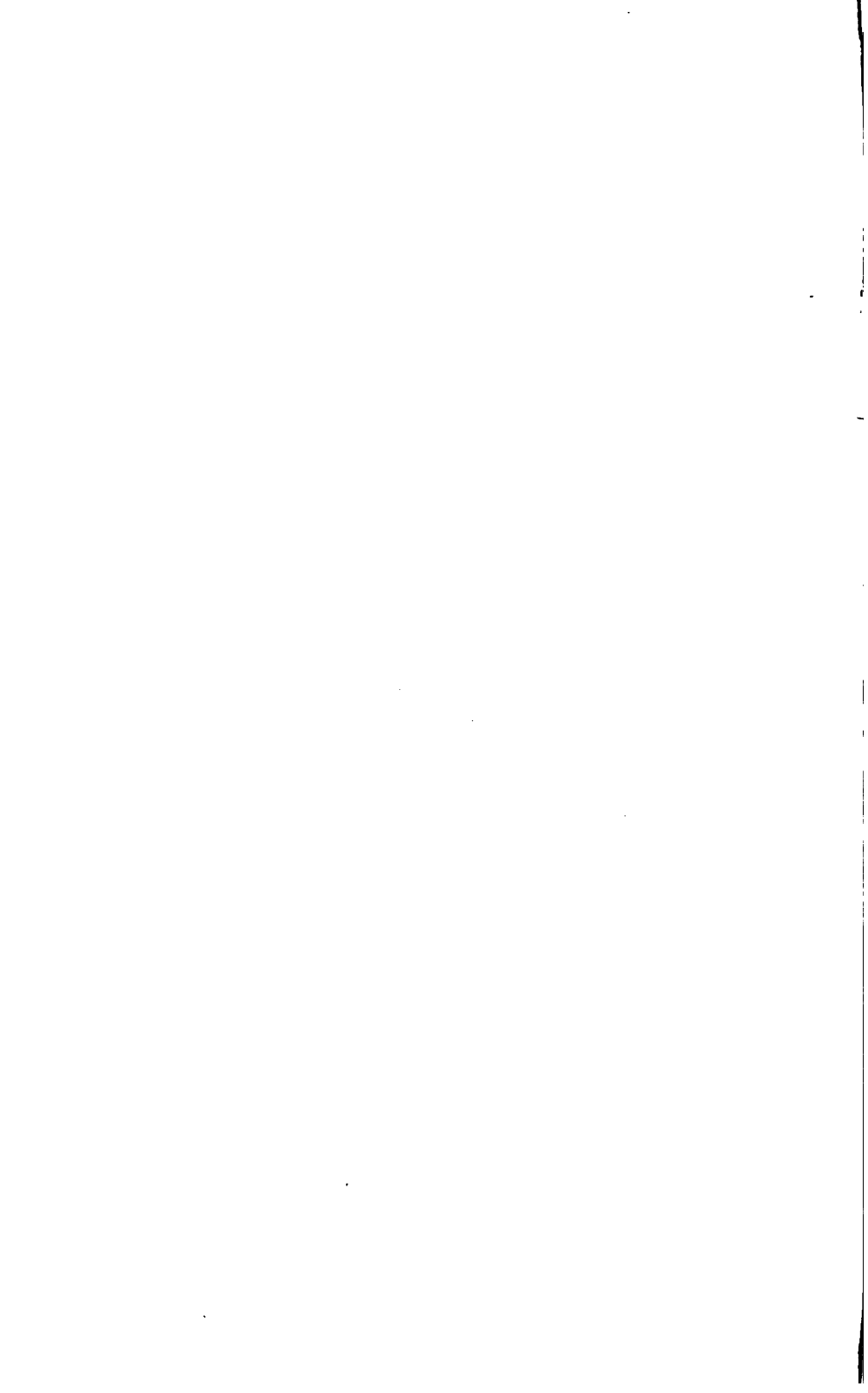
But as to the Laws of this first Parliament of 1774, scarcely

one remains without some alteration, and many have been added. These changes and additions we now propose to trace, adding, at the same time, suggestions from a MSS. of ‘the Laws,’ as proposed by Thomas Barker, of Nottingham, an old player quite unequalled in his experience as an umpire. We will take the Laws *seriatim*:—

‘I. The ball must weigh not less than five ounces and a half, nor more than five ounces and three-quarters. It must measure not less than nine inches, nor more than nine inches and one-quarter, in circumference. At the beginning of each innings either party may call for a new ball.

This weight was fixed in the Rules of 1774, but nothing about the circumference till quite a late period. Calling for a new ball applied chiefly to days when the balls were so badly made they would not last a match.

The famous old player John Small, a shoemaker by trade, excelled in making cricket-balls. These balls were at the time wholly unequalled. When eighty years of age Small sold his last half-dozen to Mr. Budd, and Mr. Ward offered him a guinea apiece for them! Mr. Budd produced one of these balls on the occasion of the wager between Colonel Berkeley and Lord Coventry, the latter wagering that he would ‘find a man before Christmas to throw a ball a hundred yards.’ Old Claphaw told us that





EDWARD GRACE, ESQ.

From a Photograph by M'Lean and Haes.

See "Cricket Legislation."



he promised Mr. Budd to find a man; and the evening before the day of trial, which was a fine, warm one, Clapshaw introduced a fine, powerful young man to Mr. Budd, and they went into the park to make a trial. The man did throw a clean hundred yards, and a little over; but the next day was cold, the man's muscles were chilled, and ninety-seven yards was all he could accomplish. Many a man is reported to be able to throw a ball one hundred yards. We have been at much pains to inquire as to a ball ever having been thrown both ways, to and fro, so as to prove the wind did not assist, but we could never find any well-authenticated instance, save one, Arnold of Cambridge, who threw seven yards more one way and three yards more the other, in the presence of the Hon. F. Ponsonby.

Barker recommends the words, 'The ball must measure three inches in diameter every way;' also that 'Either party, with consent of the other, may call for a new ball at any time of the match;' also that 'Either party may demand of the umpire to gauge the ball before used.' This alteration is suggested by his experience of the very bad balls that are made and sold—balls which, especially with rain, get sadly out of shape during an innings.

'II. The bat must not exceed four inches and one-quarter in the widest part; it must not be more than thirty-eight inches in length.'

Barker would add, 'Either party may demand of the umpires to gauge the bat;' for bats are used of $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches instead of $4\frac{1}{2}$, making a great difference in the play. The readers of Nyren will remember that about 1760 a player named White, of Ryegate, brought a bat to a match which, being the width of the stumps, effectually defended his wicket from the bowler; and, in consequence, a law was passed limiting the future width of the bat to $4\frac{1}{4}$ inches. Nyren adds, 'I have a perfect recollection of this occurrence; also that, subsequently, an iron frame, of the statute width, was constructed for, and kept by the Hambledon Club, through which

any bat of suspected dimensions was passed, and allowed or rejected accordingly.' Barker had known an instance, years since, at Lord's, when a man was sent down to the bat-shop to have his bat shaved. Mr. Budd saw Robinson's bat treated rather more unceremoniously with some one's pocket-knife. Robinson was very angry, and vowed he would do his best to serve them out for spoiling his bat, and actually hit about the field with a vengeance, and made one of his largest innings. As to the length of the bat there was no limit assigned till 1816.

'III. The stumps must be three in number, twenty-seven inches out of the ground; the bails eight inches in length; the stumps of equal and of sufficient thickness to prevent the ball from passing through.'

Barker suggests:—

'The stumps must be three in number, twenty-seven inches out of the ground. Each stump must be one inch in diameter at the top. The bails must be eight inches in length. Each bail must be $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches from shoulder to shoulder. The outer end of each bail to be one inch in length, so as not to extend beyond the stumps; the inner ends that meet on the middle stump to be half an inch; also that each party may require the umpires to gauge the bails.'

Barker remembers an instance in which the projecting end of a bail decided the fortune of a match at Chichester.

The wicket has at different times been of the following different sizes:—

1st. About 1700 it was, says Nyren, 2 feet wide by 1 foot high. This was at a time when the runner was made out by popping the ball into a hole cut between the stumps instead of knocking down the wicket.

In 1775 the old Laws specify 22 inches by 6, with only two stumps and one bail.

In 1788 it was increased to 24 by 7, with three stumps and two bails.

In 1817 further [increased to 27 by 8.

As to the third, or middle stump, Nyren says, in a Hambledon match

in 1775, Small, the last man, went in for 14 runs. It having been remarked that Lumpy's balls had three several times passed between the two stumps (that not then being considered out), it was thought a hard thing that the bowler's straightest balls should be thus sacrificed; and in consequence the stumps were soon after increased in number from two to three. Also, about this time (1775) the mode of putting a man out by placing the ball in a hole cut between the wickets was abolished, and the way (as now used) of knocking off the bails was introduced. This took place in consequence of the repeated unpleasant collisions which happened between the wicket-keeper's hands and the bat. Leg-before-wicket was also introduced about this time, but at first simply scored down as bowled; and that form of scoring does not appear in a match till August 12, 1795.

The distance between the wickets (twenty-two yards) seems to be almost the only part of the game that has not undergone an alteration. The bat has been greatly altered, being originally of a curved form. The height and breadth of the wicket has also undergone several alterations.

Gloves for cricket, made of india-rubber (flat ones, not the tubes which were introduced several years later), began to come into use shortly after the introduction of round-armed bowling (about 1835). The round-armed delivery, being much more severe, made gloves to be absolutely necessary, though at first found an impediment and laughed at by the older players. Pads also began to be used at the same time.

Spikes were introduced (it is believed) somewhere about the year 1800, and sawdust for wet weather shortly after.

'IV. The bowling crease must be in a line with the stumps; six feet eight inches in length; the stumps in the centre; with a return crease at each end towards the bowler at right angles.

'V. The popping crease must be four feet from the wicket, and pa-

ralled to it, unlimited in length, but not shorter than the bowling crease.

Barker suggests, 'Either party may require the umpires to measure the crease, and see that it is the right length.' Also, 'The popping crease must measure four feet from the wicket to the outer edge of the popping crease; unlimited in length, but not drawn shorter than 7 feet 4 inches. The crease must not be more than one inch broad. Either party may require the umpire to measure and ascertain these limitations.'

The limitation of the bowling-crease is very material to the batsman, or the bowler may bowl round him. No man ever took fuller advantage of the length of his bowling crease than Cobbett. Most bowlers end with the left toe pointed straight to the opposite wicket. Cobbett delivered the ball with his left foot crossed over his right, in a way that gave him practically two feet extra to the extent of his bowling crease.

The popping-crease requires careful measurement. Some umpires give an inch more than others. About the year 1817 the space between the creases was widened from 3 feet 10 inches to 4 feet. Barker remarked that the practice (not the law) is to play as if foot on the line saved stumping, instead of foot over the line. A wide, blurred, and ill-defined crease may spoil any match.

The popping crease was changed to 4 feet from the wicket instead of 3 feet 10 inches, said Caldecourt, at the same time that the wicket was increased from 24 by 7 to 27 by 8 inches, about the year 1817.

'The popping crease must be three feet ten inches from the wicket, and parallel to it,' are the words of the Laws in Lambert's book, dated 1816.

'VII. It shall not be lawful for either party during a match, without the consent of the other, to alter the ground by rolling, watering, covering, mowing, or beating, except at the commencement of each innings, when the ground shall be swept and rolled, unless the side next going in object to it. This

rule is not meant to prevent the striker from beating the ground with his bat near to the spot where he stands during the innings, nor to prevent the bowler from filling up holes with sawdust, &c., when the ground shall be wet.'

'VIII. After rain the wickets may be changed with the consent of both parties.'

To Law VI. Barker would add, 'The ground for the wickets shall be prepared four yards wide. Either party may require the umpires to measure the ground; and the umpires shall carry their own gauge and tape.'

In these days of measuring-chains one would suppose this superfluous; but Barker says that some years ago at Lord's—even at Lord's!—the chain was a foot short; and at Manchester about ten years since they were deluded by a false measure to the extent of three-quarters of a yard out of twenty-two! This must have made a difference. Many a man can bowl a short distance who cannot bowl a long one; and this will explain—hear it, ye yokels, who are so enthusiastic as to put shillings on the stumps—why a practised bowler on certain days seemed to be so fatal to your stumps. Dakin, a good cricket tutor, has punished us woefully in his day. He would bet us sixpences, raise his hand high, and also bowl about two yards short. Oh! it was cruel how he could rattle among our stumps with all these advantages combined.

In Law VII., as to rolling, Barker would prefer the words 'at the request of either party' to the words 'unless the side going in object,' as it stands now. He would also add, 'that not more than ten minutes be allowed for that rolling,' because rolling is sometimes made a shabby pretext to shorten the time for a drawn game.

In Law VIII. he would enact that the ground may be changed at any time during the match with the consent of both parties.

'Four balls, and over,' is the number in the earliest Laws. To bowl 'Six, and over,' has been the practice of many clubs, but the Laws always said four.

'IX. The bowler shall deliver the ball with one foot on the ground behind the bowling crease, and within the return crease, and shall bowl four balls before he change wickets, which he shall be permitted to do only once in the same innings.'

To this Barker would add not only behind the bowling crease, but also 'within the return crease,' in order to avoid tricks of bowling round the batsman.'

'X. The ball must be bowled. If thrown or jerked, or if the bowler in the actual delivery of the ball, or in the action immediately preceding the delivery, shall raise his hand or arm above his shoulder, the umpire shall call 'No ball.'

Barker would add, 'Shall call instantly on delivery,' to give time for a hit.

'XI. He may require the striker at the wicket from which he is bowling to stand on that side of it which he may direct.'

Barker would add, 'And the bowler shall not change from one side of the wicket to the other more than once in an Over.'—This is the result of painful experience in unfair attempts to worry the players, and to waste time near the end of the day.

Of course no Laws can comprise everything that should be done or left undone. We remember a question to Caldecourt—at that time regarded as the first umpire of his day—whether there was anything to prevent a man from giving the batsman guard for one side of the wicket and bowling the other. 'There is nothing at all to prevent him,' replied Caldecourt, 'unless he should happen to be a gentleman.'

And here we would observe, for the benefit of inexperienced players, that, provided the bowler's foot in delivery is behind the crease, the umpire may be quite sure that the said foot is on the ground. An experiment will prove that it is impossible to deliver the ball unless the foot behind the crease is on the ground.

The fact that the consent of your adversary is required for changing or for mending the ground in any

way renders it very necessary that you should accustom yourself to bowl both sides of the wicket. Near the end of a match we have seen the ground so deeply worn that a bowler who could not bowl both sides has been incapacitated for want of foot-hold.

'XIII. If the bowler deliver a "No ball" or a "Wide ball," the striker shall be allowed as many runs as he can get, and he shall not be put out except by running out. In the event of no run being obtained by any other means, then one run shall be added to the score of "No balls," or "Wide balls," as the case may be. All runs obtained for "Wide balls" to be scored to "Wide balls." The names of the bowlers who bowl "Wide balls" or "No balls" in future to be placed on the score, to show the parties by whom either score is made. If the ball shall first touch any part of the striker's dress or person (except his hands), the umpire shall call "Leg bye."'

In Law XII., Barker, not to add unfairly to the account of 'Byes,' to the discredit of the Long-stop, would insert, 'All runs obtained from byes or overthrows in the case of a wide ball to be scored as Wides, and not as Byes.' because the Wides may be out of the Long-stop's reach. Barker would also add, to meet cases which have lately occurred, that 'if the umpire call "Wide" too soon, and the ball be hit, that ball shall not be considered as wide, but the hitter shall be liable to be out, as with any other ball.'

It happened with Carpenter, in America, that he hit a ball called 'Wide,' and was caught. The question was whether the ball was dead. With the old underhand bowling wide balls were scarcely contemplated; nor was there for many years any law that added one to the score, or that enacted that the wide ball should not count in the over.

Still, though there was no law, there was in one notable instance a decided necessity for a law of forfeiture to the score. We allude to the ever-memorable single cricket match when, from the illness of his partner, Mr. Osbaldeston, Lambert played and

beat single-handed Lord Frederick Beauclerk and Howard. On that occasion Lambert purposely bowled wide balls to Lord Frederick to put him out of temper: this contributed to his winning the match, as described at length in 'The Cricket Field,' page 99.

Also, though Over be called, a question shall be allowed before the next ball is bowled.

There was no law for 'Lost ball' before the revise of 1809; and 'Wide balls' were not called even then.

As to lost balls, as the M. C. C. were the legislators they would be slow in noticing them, because we may consider that they rarely played on any grounds on which a lost ball was likely to occur. In the year 1861 George Parr hit clean out of Lord's from the lower wicket between the public-house and the south side. In the year 1833 Mr. F. B. Wright, the hardest hitter Oxford had ever seen in those days, if not since, hit a lost ball off Cobbett's bowling at Lord's. The ball soared high in air, and fell among nettles in the north-west corner of the ground. That hitting out of (the present) Lord's was unknown in early days may be proved by this. A mark under the upper windows of the public-house long commemorated a famous hit by Budd: but in 1836 Mr. Charles Beauclerk, son of Lord Frederick, hit a ball square to the leg above that mark in playing with us for Oxford against Cambridge.

We now come to the earliest restriction on bowling as regards the height of the hand:—

'The ball must be delivered underhanded, not thrown or jerked, with the hand below the elbow at the time of delivering the ball. If the arm is extended straight from the body, or the back part of the hand be uppermost when the ball is delivered, or the hand horizontally extended, the umpire shall call "No ball."'

This law Mr. Ward carried about 1816, as against Mr. Budd and Lambert, who had found out a very effective style of round-arm bowling.

Barker would also do justice to

the Long-stop by scoring as Leg byes 'all byes that result from balls that glance off from the person of the wicket-keeper,' as being equally beyond the command of the Long-stop as those which glance off from the person of the batsman.

'XIV. At the beginning of each innings the umpire shall call "Play;" from that time to the end of each innings no trial ball shall be allowed to any bowler.'

Barker would add to 'no trial ball'—*'nor any batting or bowling at or near the wicket, except that of the match.'* Barker says he has seen the ground artfully spoilt for leg-hitting by the marks made under pretence of practice not actually at the wicket. Such practice *near* the wicket is often quite as bad.

'XV. The striker is out if either of the balls be bowled off, or if a stump be bowled out of the ground.'

Barker would make it 'out' wilfully to knock down the wicket while the ball is in play (though not in the act of striking the ball). He saw a case of unfair play decide a match. One of the batsmen levelled the wicket to render it more difficult—or, indeed, impossible—at that wicket to run his partner out. The wicket-keeper had a chance, and no wicket to put down, unless he first set up one!

Barker would also make it 'out' for the non-striker, as well as for the striker, to wilfully strike a ball already hit.

In a famous Nottingham match, in 1817, the non-striker, while running, struck the ball to prevent its coming home.

Barker has also seen cause to make it 'out' if either of the strikers shall wilfully prevent the fielding of a ball.

Evidently all these suggestions look as if Barker had been in bad company; but the same might be said of any Old Bailey judge.

'XVI. Or, if the ball, from the stroke of the bat, or hand, but not the wrist, be held before it touch the ground, although it be hugged to the body of the catcher.'

Barker's curious experience suggests two additions:—1st. If the striker first hit the ball to the ground, and then (by the same

whirl of the bat, and therefore not wilfully, which would be 'out') strike it again, and it be caught, it shall be 'out.' 2ndly. If the ball shall finally lodge in the striker's dress, the ball shall then be considered dead.

There have been cases when a ball has run up the bat, and lodged in the striker's breast or wide pocket of his jacket. Thus once a ludicrous race took place all round the field; the wicket-keeper to pick the pocket of the ball before it touched the ground, and the striker, not daring to touch the ball, as that would make him 'out,' runs till he shakes it out!

Barker would also add that no 'catch' shall be allowed off any tent, tree, wall, or building. Though, if to touch the building is made so many runs by agreement, the ball is dead and cannot be so caught as to make a man Out.

'XVII. Or, if in striking, or at any other time while the ball shall be in play, both his feet shall be over the popping crease, and his wicket put down, except his bat be grounded within it.'

Barker would say, 'Except his bat *in hand*, or some part of his person, be within the popping crease.'

'XVIII. Or, if in striking at the ball he hit down his wicket.'

This looks plain enough, and yet a difficulty has arisen. A frequent opponent of John Marshall, the Landsdown Eleven, had an absurd way of taking guard within an inch of the stumps, and moving forward to the popping crease as the bowler delivered the ball. John Marshall whispered to the bowler, 'Go off at half-cock, and he will knock his wicket down.' Accordingly, no sooner did the umpire call 'Play,' than, six yards behind the wicket at the very first step in his run, the bowler sends in a fast underhand full toss, and his friend, utterly powerless to throw back his bat, really did hit down his wicket. Then he stoutly protested that it was not in striking at the ball—it was in going through his complicated preparatory movements.

So true is it that there may be as many difficulties in decision as there are laws in the game.

'XIX. Or, if under pretence of

running, or otherwise, either of the strikers prevent a ball from being caught, the striker of the ball is out.

This should be '*wilfully* prevent.'

'XX. Or, if the ball be struck, and he wilfully strike it again.'

'XXII. Or, if any part of the striker's dress knock down the wicket.'

Barker suggests: 'If any part of the striker's dress or person knock down the wicket, except his hat or cap accidentally fall upon the wicket.' This is a very proper ex-

ception. In the match of the Gentlemen against the Players, Mr. Charles Taylor was 'out' by his hat falling on his wicket after a splendid innings of 80 runs!

'XXIII. Or, if the striker touch or take up the ball while in play, unless at the request of the opposite party.'

This law originally stood thus: 'If y^e striker touches or takes up y^e ball till she is lying still, unless asked by y^e bowler or wicket-keeper, it's "out."'

(To be continued.)

SEVEN FLATS!

SEVEN flats! 'Twould make Apollo weep,—and Paganini stare!
A strain—to eye and heart. Enough to make one quite a fright,
This poring, poring o'er the page.—And Clement comes to-night!

Ah, Clement! If he swept the strings 'twould all be clear as day.
There are some chords—no matter where—his hand knows how to play
Chords that *will* echo when his foot beats time upon the floor.—
When Clement's voice has left my ear, there's melody no more.

Seven flats!—Was that the study door? A step upon the stair!
The contract will be signed to-night; and Clement will be there.
Be still, my heart!—Ah! well I know, while on the page I look
I'm waiting for a *signature*—that is not in the book!

What if he comes and finds me thus? And all so out of tune:
These weak hands trembling on the strings like aspen leaves in June?
Waiting for him who *should* be here; him whom the heavens send—
To make life one long harmony—*Con Moto* to the end.

Seven flats! Now wand'ring eyes no more go questing, dazing, dreaming!
Alas! sweet patience is a myth; and diligence but seeming.
The round-eyed minims dazzle me like gold rings in the sun.
Till I only see—a little brace that clasps two staves in one!

Is love, then, nought but trifling? And is this to be a wife?
To idle precious hours; and drop the music out of life?
To wait my husband's coming,—mute; when I should take my part,
And echo every master chord that beats about his heart?

Seven flats!—Though hard, I'll master it! My Clement shall not say
His wishes are as straws to me; and duty but a play.
He tells me I am perfect.—Nay, then, perfect let me be,
If but perfect in the practice of this horrid key of C!

A week ago he brought the book: called me his 'darling Grace'
And said I was 'a Muse.'—I was but musing on his face;
Thinking how low-voiced womanhood to manhood should be set
Like 'music unto noble words' where soul and heart are met.

Seven flats! Yet, courage, little wife! To-night he will be here!
And to-morrow!—Ah, to-morrow he will be far more dear!
I shall lean upon his bosom—in that glad, glad morning's gleam,
And he playing on my heartstrings like the music of a dream!

ELEANORA LOUISE HERVEY.

THE LONDON OPERA DIRECTORS :

A SERIES OF CURIOUS ANECDOTIC MEMOIRS OF THE PRINCIPAL MEN CONNECTED
WITH THE DIRECTION OF THE OPERA ;
THE INCIDENTS WHICH DISTINGUISHED THEIR MANAGEMENT ;
WITH REMINISCENCES OF CELEBRATED COMPOSERS AND THE LEADING SINGERS
WHO HAVE APPEARED BEFORE THE BRITISH PUBLIC.

By the Author of '*Queens of Song*.'

CHAPTER IV.

PART I.

MRS. YATES AND MRS. BROOKE—CECILIA DAVIES—RAUZZINI—CATERINA GABRIELLI—FIREVILLE, THE DANCER—TENDUCHI OBLIGED TO RUN AWAY—SHERIDAN AND HARRIS BECOME PURCHASERS OF THE OPERA-HOUSE.

WHEN the regency of Messrs. Vincent, Gordon, and Crawford terminated, Mrs. Yates, the actress, and Mrs. Brooke, the authoress, entered into partnership to take the direction of the Opera.

Anna Maria Yates (whose maiden name was Graham) was born, it is supposed, at Birmingham. She made her first appearance as an actress in Dublin, in the character of Anna Bullen ('Henry the Eighth'), about 1752, under the auspices of Sheridan. This gentleman, however, considered her abilities so very unpromising that he was glad to dissolve the engagement by a present. Anna Maria did not think his opinion unjust; on the contrary, she despaired of ever attaining even mediocrity. She was in the bloom of youth, but she had a weak voice, and a figure 'encumbered with corpulence,' and she fancied that, the first requisites for the stage being denied her, perseverance was useless. Poverty compelled her to resume the theatrical profession, however.

Two years after her dismissal from the Dublin theatre, she appeared at Drury Lane, in the character of Julia,—with Garrick, Moesop, and Cibber—the first night of the performance of '*Virginia*,' which was written by Mr. Crisp; but the play was so indifferent that it was acted only nine times, and the following season the management dispensed with Miss Graham's services.

On her marriage with Richard Yates, the next year, she was re-engaged by Garrick. Her husband was an experienced actor, and to him she was probably indebted for her acknowledged improvement. A total change was now perceptible both in her disposition and manner. When she first appeared in public, 'she seemed formed of the mildest materials: so much so, as to seem quite insusceptible of resentment under any provocation; but afterwards she became as remarkable for the high impetuosity of her temper'—notwithstanding which, she was always a favourite. The illness of Mrs. Cibber, the unrivalled actress, gave Mrs. Yates at last an opportunity of acquiring some reputation. Mr. and Mrs. Yates were engaged, at a salary of ten pounds per week and a benefit, by Mr. Powell, who had become manager of Covent Garden Theatre. In 1768, a quarrel arose between Mrs. Yates and Mrs. Bellamy, as the former refused to play Hermione (in the '*Distrest Mother*') for the benefit of the latter, reasonably alleging that she had to play two arduous characters the preceding and succeeding nights. A paper war ensued, in which Mrs. Bellamy displayed much wit and little consideration; yet, when Mrs. Bellamy's circumstances became so needy that help was urgently required, Mrs. Yates came forward in the most generous manner: her last appearance being for Mrs. Bellamy's benefit at Drury Lane, in 1785, nearly twenty years after the commencement of their difference. She was a highly popular actress, though she had toilsomely gained her pre-eminence; during the earlier part of her career she had performed with Holland, King, Weston, and Miss Pope, to an audience

consisting of about one hundred and seventy persons. As a manager, she had the reputation of being unusually stingy. She died in 1787.

Frances Brooke (*née* Moore) was the daughter of a clergyman. Her first literary work was a novel, 'Julia Mandeville,' which was favourably received. Her husband was chaplain to the garrison at Quebec, and having accompanied him to Canada, she there wrote her admired novel of 'Emily Montague.' Upon her return to England, she was accidentally introduced to Mrs. Yates, and a strong friendship was cemented between the two ladies. Mrs. Yates introduced Mrs. Brooke to Garrick, and he was induced to bring out a play by her. The play failed, and Mrs. Brooke was so indignant, that she wrote a novel—the 'Excursion'—for the purpose of ridiculing the manager; though she afterwards sincerely regretted having been so severe, and not only lamented, but retracted what she had said in that book. Her tragedy of the 'Siege of Sinope,' written with the view of placing Mrs. Yates in a conspicuous character, was brought out by Mr. Harris, but was coldly received. Her next and most popular production was 'Rosina,' which was one of the most successful musical entertainments ever placed on the stage, its success being due as much to the merit of the composer, Shield, as to the talent of the author. She was a favourite with Dr. Johnson and with Miss Seward, and greatly liked by all the eminent literary personages of the period. She died in 1789.

Mrs. Yates and Mrs. Brooke purchased the King's Theatre in 1773, at the sum of 7400*l.*, expecting to obtain permission to act plays alternately with opera. To this plan, however, they could not obtain the sanction of the Lord Chamberlain. The theatre opened in November, when Mrs. Yates spoke a poetical exordium.

The first opera performed was 'Lucio Vero,' by Sacchini, who was now firmly established in the good opinion of the public. In this opera, Miss Cecilia Davies, known in Italy by the name of L'Inglesina, made

her début in London, and sang several beautiful airs composed for the purpose of displaying her neat and rapid execution. Miss Davies was not only the first Englishwoman who performed the principal female parts in the leading theatres of Italy, but who had ever been thought worthy of singing there at all. When a mere child, she went to France with her sister,—who was much admired for her performance on the glasses—and went with her thence to Vienna, where they became acquainted with Hasse and Faustina. She was unrivalled for power of execution. Travellers used to confess that Gabrielli was the only singer in Europe who surpassed her. Her voice, though not of great volume, or perhaps sufficiently powerful for a large theatre, was clear and perfectly in tune. After singing a few years in England she returned to the Continent. For many years she was entirely forgotten, her name only mentioned occasionally as belonging to a by-gone age, when suddenly, during the first half of the present century, the public heard with grieved surprise that she had been living for years in London in the utmost poverty and neglect.

In the spring of 1774, Sacchini produced two new operas, 'Niletti' and 'Perseo,' which were very much admired. The articles of Millico and Miss Davies having expired, these two singers were replaced by Venanzio Rauzzini and the Schindlerin. Rauzzini was a native of Rome; he had acquired celebrity in Italy and Germany, and was regarded as a very superior singer. From his great dramatic power, he was called the Italian Garrick. He was a handsome young man, an excellent musician, and not only a good singer but a tolerable composer, and one of the best teachers of that period. His voice was sweet, clear, flexible, and of unusual extent, but it was not powerful—a defect which was increased by his love for composition and playing on the harpsichord. He was very witty, and an agreeable man in private society. It was some time before his abilities were acknowledged

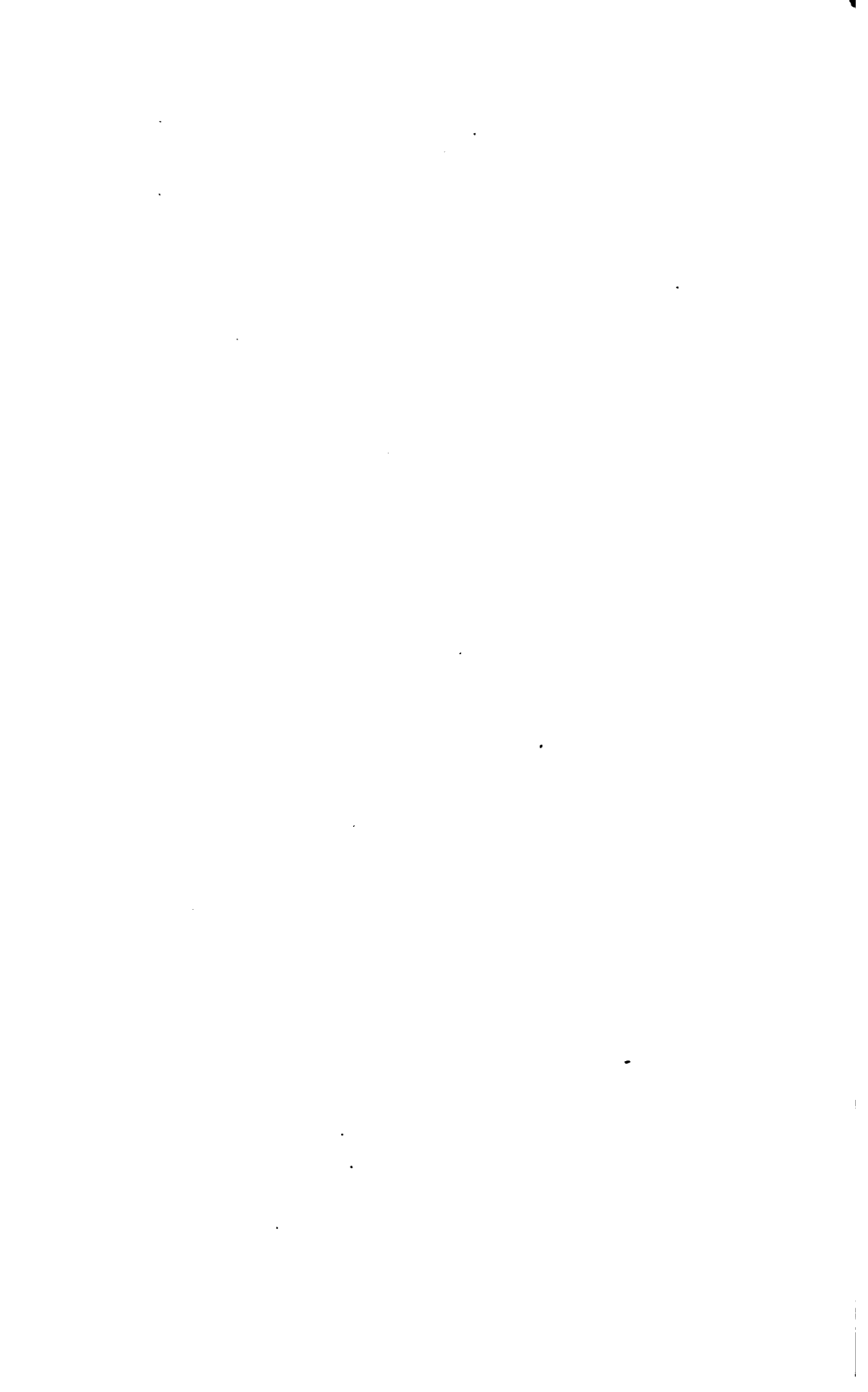


MRS. YATES.

IN THE CHARACTER OF ELECTRA.

From the Painting by Samuel Cotes.

See "London Opera Directors."



here; however, his taste, fancy, and delicacy, united to his handsome person and spirited acting, eventually gained for him unqualified approval. He formed many English singers: among others John Braham and Signora Storace. The Schindlerin, who had sung with him at Venice, and was engaged at his recommendation, was a German, young, 'and by many thought handsome.' Her figure was elegant and graceful on the stage, and she was a good actress, though in private life she was 'coquettish, silly, and insipid.' Her voice was a mere thread; she had no taste or knowledge, and, both on and off the stage, she was simply Rauzzini's pupil. Rauzzini tried

several unsuccessful devices to obtain an engagement for the Schindlerin to sing with him a second season. Signora Sestini came here this summer from Lisbon, as prima buffa; she was beautiful, and a sprightly, if somewhat exuberant actress, and her voice was good, though a little gritty and sharp.

The lady directors engaged Caterina Gabrielli in 1775-6. This celebrated songstress was then forty-five, and had a reputation far surpassing even that of Cuzzoni, Faustina, or Mingotti. She was the daughter of a cook, and took her name from her father's master, Cardinal Gabrielli, who had paid the expenses of her musical education.



SIGNOR RAUZZINI.

She was one of the most capricious women that ever existed, but so fascinating even in her ill-humour and extravagance, that she was irresistible. It was supposed that she had achieved 'more conquests than any one woman breathing.' She was not bad-tempered, yet she was so obstinate that when once she took a fancy, nothing could move her: neither coaxing, nor threats, nor imprisonment had the slightest effect upon her; she declared that she was unable to command her capricious temper, and that she was

altogether governed by it. She was generous to prodigality, and scattered lavishly the enormous sums which she gained by singing, and by obtaining presents from princes and noblemen. She lived like a queen, retained many servants, and when travelling, had a courier to precede her. In Italy, her splendid style of living became a proverb; whenever anybody was remarkable for reckless outlay people would say, 'Chi e' la Gabrielli?' It needed great persuasion to induce her to visit England. At first she positively re-

fused to come. 'I should not be mistress of my own will,' she said; 'and whenever I might have a fancy not to sing, people would insult, perhaps misuse me; it is better to remain unmolested, were it even in a prison.' Then she consented to come, if her favourite Signor Manzoletto were engaged to sing with her. The directresses would not agree to displace Rauzzini, and finding that she could not gain her point, she deigned to accept their offers. She appeared in only three operas. Although her beauty was beginning to be touched by the remorseless hand of time, and by the effects of the fevered life she had led, she was exceedingly handsome, her only personal defect being a coquettish squint in the right eye; she was short, but most graceful, and stately as an empress; her countenance was full of intelligence, and piquant in expression. Her voice was exquisite, and her facility extraordinary. When she appeared in London, however, she would not take the least trouble to please the audience. Cuzzoni, Faustina, and Mingotti had spared no efforts to render themselves agreeable to the public, whatever they might be to their friends and the manager; but La Gabrielli either sang badly or would not sing at all, frequently sending her sister Francesca to perform her parts. Her caprice and insolence were only equalled by her laziness and extravagance. Lord Mount Edgumbe saw her in the opera of 'Didone,' by Sacchini, but could remember nothing of her performance beyond the fact that she evidenced particular anxiety to preserve the equilibrium of her 'enormous hoop,' as she sidled into the flames of Carthage. The haughty prima donna and her audience were equally dissatisfied with each other; she was angered that they would not yield to her impertinences, and they were indignant that she would not exert herself in the slightest degree to gratify them. She did not remain long, quitting England in 1777, in supreme displeasure.

The chief dancers at this period were Fierville and Baccelli in the serious ballet, and the two Valouys

in demi-caractère. The wildest caprices of the singers were as nothing to the extravagances perpetrated by the dancers, male and female, who entertained the most exalted opinion of their own merits. The elder Vestris, *le dieu de la danse*, used to say, 'Moi et le Roi de Prusse, nous sommes les plus grandes hommes en Europe.' His absurd observations are too well known to need repetition. Le grand Petrot, who was an European celebrity, was one of the most insolent men that ever existed. Le Pic was the second in rank to Fierville; he was extremely handsome, and had a beautiful form. Fierville was considered the finest dancer that had come to England for years. His face was so perfectly hideous, as described by Angelo, the fencing-master, in his 'Reminiscences,' that it is impossible to repeat the details; but his form was so exquisitely symmetrical, that his shape was 'the envy of all the ladies.' His style of dancing is thus described by Angelo, who knew him: 'When he made his *entrée* in the *ballet sérieux*, the figurantes retired to the further end of the stage, and you beheld a figure with a cap on, and an enormously high plume of ostrich feathers, a very long waist, and a hoop extending on each side above a foot, the petticoat hanging as low as the knees; then sinking, like a lady's courtesy, and rising gradually till he stood in an erect position, he was seen standing on the points of his toes. In a very few strides he seemed to move in the air, till he approached almost to the orchestra, and, after a few *entrechats*, he alights on the extremity of one of his feet, and then, in a remarkably graceful attitude, he balances himself, and remains stationary some seconds, which used to elicit abundance of applause. . . . The last time Fierville danced, I was present: it was at a morning rehearsal, and at that time it was the fashionable lounge to attend them. While rehearsing, he sprained the tendon Achillis, which utterly prevented him from ever returning to the stage again; but he continued in this country, teaching some of the first ladies' schools, and was in the

way of making a rapid fortune.' But the immense sums which he acquired at various times he squandered away, wasting the greater part of his income at his country seat, near Stanmore, Middlesex.

In 1776, Tenducci, who had attained much eminence, was obliged to fly from London, to escape his creditors. He left England heavily in debt, and stayed away until his affairs were arranged. The aristocracy flattered him so much, and courted his society so frequently, that, from vanity, he plunged into expenses which the largest fortune would scarcely have warranted. He returned the following year, and took an engagement at Drury Lane,

where he sang till 1794. He composed an English opera during the time of his engagement at that theatre. Madame Todi, a Portuguese, arrived in 1777, but she failed to please, although she tried both comic and serious opera, and the next season she returned to the Continent.

In 1778, Mrs. Yates and Mrs. Brooke relinquished the management, when Messrs. Sheridan and Harris became joint purchasers of the Opera House, at the price of 22,000*l.*, subject to the yearly rent of 127*0**l.* This high appreciation of the property is supposed to have been given in expectation of the possibility of acting English pieces,



RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN.

under the authority of the dormant patent in the possession of Mr. Harris.

Thomas Harris was descended from a respectable family, and was trained to a commercial life; he received an excellent education, and having by industry acquired a competent fortune, he joined Mr. Rutherford (1767) in the purchase of Covent Garden Theatre. He was a liberal manager, and brought forward talent, endeavouring, as far as possible, to avoid cliques and par-

ties. Unfortunately, he was too diffident of his own judgment, and consulted men who had an interest in deceiving him.

Richard Brinsley Sheridan, the second son of Thomas Sheridan, the actor, was born in 1751. When very young, he was brought from Ireland, and placed at Harrow, whence he went to the Temple. In 1776 he purchased a share in Drury Lane Theatre. It would need a volume to portray his life, character, and peculiar temper. Every

one is more or less familiar with the outline of his almost romantic history; with his early struggles and surprising success in everything to which he chose to turn his attention; the splendour of the meridian of his career; the dark close of his life, when, surrounded by duns, writs, executions, which had pursued him even to the corner where he lay down to die, he wrote despairingly, 'I am absolutely undone and broken-hearted.' He was one of those brilliant meteors which at long intervals shoot across our social horizon. It is impossible to read his biography without mingled feelings of admiration and compassion

—admiration of the varied talents of the man, and compassion for the unhappy fate which he drew down on himself. His engaging manners, his dazzling wit and genial humour, the fluency of his language, the charm of his voice, his exhaustless good temper, and singular faculty of accommodating himself to every taste and disposition, combined to render him the idol of the London salons, as his fiery sarcasm, power of argument, and clear brain made him a leader in the Senate, and his literary genius raised him to the highest eminence within the national theatre.

MY COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION.

WHAT shall we do with Edward?

For some months past my good mother had heard this daily query from the lips of my father, the Rev. David White, rector of Poorpay, Yorkshire, accompanied always by a deep sigh from the very bottom of the parental heart; and my return from Rugby for the holidays caused this important question to be renewed again and again.

Sometimes my mother ventured to reply:

'Well, David, he is only seventeen, and so fond of animals, why not make him a farmer?'

'Farmer! bosh! my dear; how can any one make a living by farming in these days? He had almost better be a curate, and 'passing rich, with 40*l.* a year.'

I tried to back my mother up in these attacks, pleading my love for horses, dogs, and rabbits, adding, at the same time, that I would much sooner work with my hands than my head, and liked haymaking much better than classics or mathematics. But in vain!

My poor parents were at their wits' end. Even Cousin Will would not take me into his business. He said he did not like gentlemen clerks.

A friendly neighbour suggested sheep-farming in New Zealand or

Australia, but an only son and no capital was a sufficient bar to such an undertaking.

One morning we were all seated round the breakfast-table, my future prospects being, as usual, the subject of conversation, when the letters arrived, and among others there was one for my father, which he had no sooner opened, than our curiosity was excited by various pent-up sounds which came from under his clerical tie. We all looked up. My mother said:

'What is it, my dear?'

'Well, now, only think! Who would have thought it? Here is a line from my old friend, Jones; and what do you think has happened to Bobby?'

'What?'

'Why, he has passed *first* at the competitive examination for the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich.'

We were astonished at so grand a result. I mildly added, 'I am so glad.' But I did not feel comfortable: I dropped my toast, and a kind of cold shiver ran through me as I called to mind the many stories which were current at Rugby of the stiffness of the examination, and of twelve hours' hard work every day in some cramming school as a preparation for the no over-pleasant duties of a gentleman cadet; how

strict they were at Woolwich! and that horrid drill!

There was a long pause; but I felt my father's eye gradually fix itself upon me, and my mother's soon followed. I knew at that moment my fate was sealed. I feebly awaited my doom. It came at last, by my father saying, 'Ted, my boy,

Woolwich for you.' My mother, 'How nice for him to be an officer!' And my little sister Fanny, 'Oh yes, with a gold-laced coat and prancing horse.'

I moved uneasily on my chair, and drank the remainder of my tea. I saw the game was up, and that it would be no use my standing out



against the united wishes of my family; so I consented to prepare for Woolwich, and take my chance at the dreaded competitive examination.

No more Rugby for me. I was despatched, even before my holidays were over, to Dr. Cramwell's Army Preparatory School, Blackheath,

S.E., which establishment had been highly recommended to my father by the hateful Jones. I found there sixty other young aspirants to military glory, but no nice study of my own, and no easy hours with lots of half-holidays.

The doctor said mine was an urgent case; no time was to be lost,

as I had only five months to prepare, and he was desirous not to disgrace his establishment by having me plucked.

As the time approached, my instructors became more and more anxious about me; they evidently had grave doubts of my success: they visited me frequently at my desk, saying, 'Come, White, get on, get on.'

My hours of relaxation became fewer and fewer, until a day or two before the fatal hour when I was to be introduced to her Majesty's examiners, I really seemed to have nothing but work, sitting up late at night, and rising early in the morning. I almost fancied I must be the identical Jack alluded to in the proverb, 'That all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy.'

I saw by my glass how pale I was becoming, but I drank only water to keep my head clear, and was determined to persevere in my undertaking.

I was encouraged not only by frequent letters from my good mother, and by a promise of my father's accompanying me to Chelsea Hospital the first day, but when I had triumphantly proved x to equal 5 , the doctor's cheery voice gave me renewed life by saying, 'Well done, White! we may manage it yet.'

There was another young man, a friend of mine, called Brown, going up with me to Chelsea; but our principal did not seem to have any doubt of his passing, as he had already taken a high place in the Sandhurst examination the week before, and now was only going up for Woolwich to please his friends, who desired to see him commissioned in one of the scientific corps; but he told me, as a great secret, that he did not intend to pass for Woolwich, because the cadets at Sandhurst were not nearly so hard-worked, and he would only have to stay there one year instead of two and a half or three.

The dreaded day arrived at last. I felt nervous and anxious; I ate but little breakfast; my new gloves would not go on, and I fidgetted about till the summons arrived for me to appear in the private study of

Dr. Cramwell. His last words were:

'Now, White, don't be flurried; take it coolly. Treat the examination-papers as if you were doing them a kindness in answering the questions. Read the whole paper fairly through first; then write down what you know off by heart, and afterwards tackle those questions which require more thought. And mind and don't leave the hall till you are obliged, for when you see others going out, you will have an inclination to follow them. Good-bye, White; don't disgrace this establishment.'

I felt rather like a man going to be executed as Brown accompanied me down to the station. He was a cheery fellow, though dreadfully idle. He had made seven visits to Chelsea before his merits were appreciated and his name appeared on the successful list for Sandhurst; and now that he was not intending to pass into Woolwich, his mind was quite easy, and any little nervousness he ever possessed must long ago have left him.

Seeing I looked rather down in the mouth, he said:

'Hallo, White! you look rather green about the gills; you must not be so shaky; nervous men never pass; pluck up your spirits. Why, at my fifth attempt, there was a fellow in such a funk that when they gave him his number, and asked him to sign his name opposite to it, he could not make a mark on the paper. This was before the examination commenced. They waited for him a long time; but no! he could not hold his pen; so he was obliged to get up and leave the room, and go home to his friends.'

I sighed deeply, and I thought the poor fellow's feelings must have been the same as I was then experiencing. The train was nearing London, and my head felt dizzy and faint.

On Brown perceiving the bad effect his first story had produced, he tried another:

'When I went up the second time, there was a plucky fellow whose presence of mind never forsook him,

for after he had received the mathematical paper and read the questions well over, he seemed to make a kind of mental calculation, weighing in one scale the value of the prize for which he was about to compete, and in the other the labour and toil before it could be attained: he knew that even when he became an officer his pay would barely reach 100*l.* a year. I saw him pause, turn down the corner of his paper, and

write upon it in large letters, "This cannot be done for the money." He held it up for us all to see, took up his hat, and walked out.'

I felt better after this anecdote, and said, with great earnestness:

'Oh! Brown, if we could only see the questions before we go in to the examination.'

Brown answered:

'I dare say; but that's no go now. At my fourth trial, when



FASHING THE DOCTOR.

the business was half over, there was a grand row; all our papers were taken from us, and new ones given out, and we had to begin again afresh. In those days the professors had their questions printed the night before, and some fellow had bribed one of the printer's devils to give him a copy; but unfortunately for him, he answered every question so pat, that they smelt a rat; the whole affair was discovered,

and the wretched briber turned out. Now they take good care not to have their papers printed till an hour or so before they are wanted.'

By this time our train had reached London Bridge, where my father received me with open arms. Brown seemed quite at home with him at once, and we all took the steamboat for old Chelsea. But I must say when I saw the venerable pile, my heart sank into my boots. In vain

my father said, 'Come, now, don't be frightened!' with Brown chiming in, 'Cheer up, old boy!'

I only got worse and worse, and tried to comfort myself by biting holes in the top of the fingers of my new gloves.

As soon as we landed my father wisely took us to have some refreshment, and, remembering the buns of Chelsea, we entered a celebrated bun-house; but I could scarcely eat anything; I did, however, manage to drink a couple of glasses of pale sherry (?). I felt better; my strength returned. I placed my feet firmly down, and said, 'Now I am ready.'

We soon found our way to the Hospital gates, guided by a stream of young men all in new hats and gloves. On entering, we were politely shown along a passage to a large room, with a curtain drawn across one end. We found already some ten or twelve candidates listening eagerly to a voice coming from behind the curtain, which I was told belonged to the medical examiner. I heard a little scuffling; and the voice said, 'That will do; you may go. Next!' Another stepped behind the screen, but he was so dreadfully short-sighted no glass that was ever invented could make him see properly. He soon returned, saying, 'He won't have me!' Another was rejected for a weak chest. At last my turn came. I passed the rubicon, and found myself alone with the dreaded medico.

My boots and stockings were ordered off; my coat, waistcoat, tie, and collar quickly deposited on a chair; my shirt-sleeves and trousers well tucked up; and I was thumped, and sounded, and examined, pretty much in the same way as I had seen the farmers at Poorpay treat the cattle before they bought them. Then I was asked to read first with one eye and then with the other; to hop first on one leg, then on the other; open my mouth, show my teeth, draw a long breath or two; and, rather exhausted, I welcomed the mandate to depart; the doctor also adding, 'You will do very well.'

My father was waiting for me out-

side, and we had the remainder of the day to ourselves.

Next morning we arrived at Chelsea in good time, and wandered about the Hospital grounds, meeting everywhere candidates with books in their hands; some with confident bearing, others with downcast and dejected looks; but all trying to learn something up to the last moment.

At half-past ten o'clock my father bade me 'Good-bye!' and Brown, taking my arm to encourage me, we entered the fatal portal, when we were each presented with a numbered ticket, and ushered into a noble-looking old hall, hung around with banners, and flags, and eagles taken from the enemy in many a hard-fought battle.

About one hundred and fifty desks was all that the body of the hall contained, placed a little distance apart. I soon found the one with my number upon it, and sat down, expecting to see Brown by my side; but no! he was at the opposite side of the room; and we had evidently been purposely separated.

When all the desks were occupied a list was brought round to us with our numbers on one side, and we were requested to sign our names opposite to them. I remembered Brown's story, and wrote mine pretty well; but I saw many shakyl-looking signatures, as if written by very old men.

This being over, a large packet was solemnly brought forward, which, being opened, was found to contain the Examination Papers. They were handed round, and the real work now began in earnest.

No sound was heard but the scratching of one hundred and fifty pens as they ran along the surface of the paper.

At first I was rather nervous, and the questions seemed to swim before my eyes, but my courage soon returned, and I answered all the queries I knew after reading them carefully over. I had heard that often the candidates were so nervous that they only read the first half of the question, and then wrote the answer, thinking all the time they had done the whole of it.

All went well for the first hour; not a word had been spoken; when our attention was taken off by one of the examiners finding a book in the possession of a pale-faced young man sitting in front of me. This was strictly contrary to the orders we had previously received.

In vain he pleads and makes excuses for himself. He is ignominiously expelled from the hall, and told that he need not appear there again.

Long before the time of closing many had given up their papers; but I remained to the end, and thought I had done well on the whole.

Outside we were received by our crammers; the doctor was there to meet us; and when I had shown him the paper of questions, and told him my answers, he seemed pleased, and said, 'That 'll do, White; you may have a chance, after all.'

I overheard many remarking how hard the paper was, others saying they were sure the examiner had made some mistake in question 4 or 5; and when we adjourned to lunch at the public-house outside the gates, the subject was discussed with renewed vigour.

We were accosted by several strangers evidently connected with various outfitting establishments; one was specially remarkable for his burly size and elaborate get-up; he even wore spurs, and led us to suppose that he had received private information respecting the papers which were to be laid before us on the morrow. At length, however, his real character showed itself: he produced his circulars, and asked for our patronage when we ordered our outfits.

I thought this rather a good joke, as there were only vacancies at Woolwich for one third of us; and then we should have to remain there as cadets for two or three years before we received our commissions.

Next morning the faces in the grounds were more cheerful. I heard many discussing the delight they had experienced at such-and-such a place of amusement the night before. One young man was very loud in the praises of a cele-

brated comic actor; but they looked pale and fagged, and evidently had not been so early to bed as they might have been.

Other groups were smoking and laughing, and some more sober-looking were poring over their books, getting up the subject for the day.

At half-past ten we flocked once more to our desks, and the work began again; but before long I saw my theatrical friend put down his pen, lay his head on his hands, and take a sound nap, which lasted for some time, till he was awake by one of the examiners. He had certainly been quite knocked up the night before; and it was out of the question his doing anything to-day.

I did not succeed so well the third day, but the fourth revived my spirits; and at the end of a fortnight, when the affair was over, I thought there was a slight chance of my passing.

Oh, how glad I was to find myself once more in the train for the north, far away from examiners and crammers! And what a joyful reception I had from my family as I 'fought my battles o'er again,' although my mother did say, 'How pale poor Edward looks!'

We were all very anxious as to the result. Dr. Cramwell had promised to write as soon as he could obtain any information, and when his letter came at last the excitement was intense. My father opened it, and read how the doctor 'congratulated me on my passing,' and enclosed the list of successful candidates, from which I should see that the position my name occupied would only nerve me to fresh exertion.

The list fell from my father's hands as he warmly applauded my success. My mother covered me with kisses, saying, 'I always knew he would pass!'

The good news was quickly communicated to our faithful domestics, who soon spread it through the village; and our neighbours and parishioners came running in to wish us joy, and the church-bells gave out a merry peal in honour of my success.

After the excitement had somewhat subsided my father remembered Dr. Cramwell's list. He picked it up, and began reading out the several names.

From what the doctor had said in his letter I flattered myself I was well up in the list; but when I heard name after name, and mine came not, I was much discomfited; and when, last of all—'No. 125, Edward White, 1,621 marks,' my face fell, and my satisfaction at

passing cooled down. But I was consoled by my father saying, 'Never mind, Ted! better last of those that passed than first of those who are plucked!'

I thought so too, and all was well again.

Before the week was over I had bid them all a fond farewell, and was on my way to Woolwich.

By-and-by I shall tell you how I got on there.

CHARADE.

'TWAS at my First I Flora met,
 In beauty's peerless halls;
 The feast was spread, the dancers set,
 The music thrilled the walls;
 Yet when I stood the fair beside,
 (Upon a dance I reckoned),
 She scorned me, and she turned aside,
 Because I was my Second.

The scene that eve was very bright,
 The dance was very gay;
 To me they seemed as dark as night—
 Dull as a sunless day.
 Alas! that beauty's charm should e'er
 Vex those whom they've delighted!
 Alas! that venturous youth should dance
 To ask—and to be slighted!

In anger proudly swelled my heart,
 I turned to leave the hall;
 'Twas then that with her matchless art,
 Bright Flora sang my All.
 Sweet, passing sweet, it struck my ears,
 -Like music from above;
 My pride was melted into tears,
 My anger into love.

H. F.

MY FIRST SOIRÉE.

I AM a young housekeeper of large ideas married to a quiet man of small means. I have extensive notions of how things ought to be done, and I endeavour to carry them out with refinement and economy combined. But it is rather difficult to keep to that happy ideal when dragged first to one side and then to the other—now by my husband's limited balances, and now by my own unlimited aspirations. Struggling always between these two opposite poles, my life has a certain uncomfortable misfit about it: a want of harmony between desires and attainments that strikes one as disagreeably as a velvet dress trimmed with imitation lace, or a homely Carmelite bedecked with gold and silver tags.

I have been married now about two years. Not a comfortable period, I think: just long enough to see the lover break to pieces on the sandbar of marriage, but not long enough for the building up of the friend out of the wreck. I have begun to reason on my husband's character—never a wise thing in a wife—to weigh his imperfections, to criticize his good qualities, to penetrate the meaning of his actions—in a word, to understand him; and I do not think that husbands gain by being understood. But then perhaps I am prejudiced in favour of romance, and am more fretful and *exigeante* than I ought to be. Jonathan—Jonathan is my husband—says I am.

Married two years, as I have said, and we had never yet given a party! when one day, three weeks since, my husband proposed to me, quite of his own accord, that we should invite a few friends to tea—just a few, and without ceremony—as we had been out a good deal lately, and had given no kind of return.

'How many do you think of, Jonathan?' I asked, taking out my tablets, which I always carried in my pocket. Jonathan gave them to me before we married; and my naughty baby *would* play with them the other day, and broke one of the

leaves. Jonathan was so angry about it!

'Oh, just one or two, Totty! The A——'s; and the B——'s; old C——, perhaps; and the D——'s too, if you like.'

'And the E——'s,' I said. 'We went to them, if you remember, last Christmas: we must have them in return.'

'Very well, as you wish it; and I should like to show the F——'s a little attention as well. But, remember, Totty, I want only a very few, and no fuss or ostentation.'

It was all very well for Jonathan to say this; but I should like to know where we were to draw the line? and who we were to leave out? and if we asked all that we ought to ask, and so made a large party of it, as we ought to do, how could we possibly give only beef and bread? as he said, in his slow, stupid way. But men are so stupid! They never see things in a rational light! However, Jonathan had done it himself, and had only himself to blame when he came home that night, and I showed him my list of a hundred and forty, each one of whom it was absolutely imperative on us to invite, either as an acknowledgment of kindness shown to ourselves, or because of the wisdom of conciliating influential friends for dear baby's sake, or from the principle of mere ornamentation, and the advantage of good names and *recherchées* toilettes in a drawing-room of no pretensions. Whatever the reason, there was the necessity; one hundred and forty to be invited, not one of whom could possibly be knocked off the list.

Jonathan was very savage when I read the names over to him. 'What could I mean by such absurdity?' he said. 'Did I want to ruin him outright? A hundred and forty people, indeed! How could they all, or half of them, cram into our small rooms? and what were they to do when they had crammed in? That was always the way! If ever he proposed any-

thing quiet and rational and inexpensive I must break it all up with my absurd notions of gentility and cost, and either make the whole thing impossible, or to be attained at too great a sacrifice.'

And so he went on scolding for half an hour, I saying nothing, but drawing spider-legs from every name, till the tablets looked tattooed. At last, when he had finished—for even a husband's lecture must come to an end some time—I said, very quietly, 'Well, now that you have done, will you kindly look over this list with me, and tell me who we are to leave out?'

He did not like being spoken to so coolly, but he could not find fault with me, because I kept my temper when he lost his; so he took the tablets from my hand, and began checking off the names, one by one, as he spelt them out. Of course we had a little quarrelling over some of them; for all that he particularly disliked I particularly desired should be asked, and all that he cared most for I thought of least importance. This is generally the way with husbands and wives—is it not? So I do not mention it as anything extraordinary. After we had fought about fifty battles in this manner, ending always by retaining the name in question as indispensable, Jonathan's patience gave way; I knew it would; besides, his smoking time had come.

'There, do as you like!' he cried, ungraciously, flinging the tablets into my lap. 'I wash my hands of the whole affair, and will take neither interest nor responsibility in it. I am very sorry that I said a word about it. I meant a quiet little friendly evening of one or two only, and you have swelled it up into a monstrous party, as you always do; so now you may manage it for yourself: it is your affair, not mine!'

And then he stalked away to the door, and I began to cry. But, as he did not look back—and, indeed, would not have cared if he had: he was far too cross—after a little time I thought it wiser to leave off and begin my calculations for supper;

for now I was determined on my party, and determined, too, to have it my own way.

The next day I really set to work. First there were the printed invitations to get, with envelopes to match; and this was the beginning of my troubles, for I could not find any in our whole neighbourhood of the pattern I wanted. I remembered a certain form which Lady Twoshoes always used, and I was determined I would have this, or none. I cannot describe to you half the difficulties I encountered. I think I must have walked between twenty and thirty miles looking for this form, which at last I found in an obscure printer's in the City—the only house in London where it was to be had, and which was, in point of fact, the source of supply to my Lady Twoshoes' own stationer's. I was not a little proud of this triumph of energy, as you may suppose, and ordered my four quires with the feelings of a successful general; but when they came home—which they did by post—they were not quite what I expected. They were very dirty, all the outside leaves unusable by reason of grimy thumb-marks, and the string, which had been tied too tightly round them, had cut into some and marked all. Besides, they were a shilling a quire more than the ordinary forms; the man making that addition, as his commentary on my violent exclamation of pleasure when I found them, and the frankness with which I told him I had searched all over London for them in vain, and would have given anything in the world for that one special form of invitation, which no one but my Lady Twoshoes ever used. I had lost a great deal of time in this search: so much, that, instead of giving a three weeks' invitation, as I had intended, I was obliged to cut it down to a fortnight and two days, which was a bad augury to start with; for, as we were going to give a party, I wanted it thoroughly well done, and without flaw or blemish anywhere. However, I was obliged to put up with this small mortification, and issued my hundred and

forty invitations with a proud heart if a beating one.

I expected all the answers in twenty-four hours at the very least, but by the end of three days I had received only five—five of the least important; and then came three, conditional and doubtful; and then one refusal; and then another acceptance. So slowly they all came in, that it was not till the very morning of the day that I received the last. Fancy my feelings, being kept in suspense for a fortnight and two days as to the number of guests to come, and consequently to provide for, both in seats and supper! I do think that people should reply to invitations more promptly. I am sure I always do, for mamma taught me that it was a point of good breeding to do so; but people are so odd and uncouth now-a-days! And all this time Jonathan was so sulky there was hardly any living with him, and would not even talk of the evening or help me in the least. I had never seen him so cross since I married; and he has a temper, too, and not always under control.

Well! I had at first resolved that the evening should not cost above five pounds. I had made the most minute calculations with my cook Betsey, and we both came to the conclusion that five pounds would see us safely and handsomely through the undertaking. She was to cook the supper; we were to have the greengrocer's boy to help the housemaid, and a little girl to wash up; and then the greengrocer himself, in a nice new suit, would come and open the door and hand the refreshments; for I was not going to do the thing shabbily, and have only my stupid women to wait; and altogether I thought we should get through famously. But at the eleventh hour—I mean the day before—Betsey lost her nerve, and threw up her place and the supper in a breath. My friend the greengrocer, I found out afterwards, had frightened her. He had a sister, a cook out of place, whom he wanted engaged for the job, which I was obliged to do, giving her ten shillings for the day's work.

The greengrocer's sister was a woman of as large ideas as my own: larger, indeed, for she scouted my programme as utterly inadequate, and silenced me with a word when I attempted to interpose a faint caution as to the need of economy. 'She knew her business,' she said, loftily; 'and as she was responsible for the supper she must be allowed to do it in her own way.'

I had nothing for it, then, but to submit, privately beseeching Betsey to be as careful of matters as possible; but Betsey was a weak-minded girl, who always gave in to everybody; so that I was quite convinced I had no background in her, and that the greengrocer's sister might ruin us if she liked. But in the ruin surely the supper would be perfect!

The evening came, and the rooms really looked very pretty. I had spent a good deal of the allotted five pounds on flowers; but then flowers are as indispensable to the success of an evening as lights and cakes; and it was the supper, not the adjuncts, that I had limited to that small sum, which now I began to think ridiculous and impossible: the greengrocer's sister told me I might be thankful if I did it under twenty. I had a pretty new dress for the occasion, blue and white, and really I believe that I looked very well; but Jonathan, who was awfully cross, told me I looked worse than I had ever done before, and that my dress—especially my head, of which I was immensely proud—was a perfect ridicule: pronounced in the French manner, which I thought more ridiculous than my bright-blue pompon. So that did not raise my spirits to begin with: neither did the successive arrival of the families of my two grandest lions, without the lions, help to their exaltation. Still, I bore up against the feeling—terribly increasing both in depth and intensity—that the thing was destined to be a failure, and resolved to do my best to make it yet a success. But something stronger than my will fought against me that night; and so my poor party was doomed.

We had asked every one we knew, so the consequence was that all sorts of wrong people jostled each other. People who had publicly insulted others met, hot and flurried, at the doorway; people who had cut others stood face to face, not a couple of inches apart; people with a life-feud between them stretched out their hands at the same moment to the same mutual friend; one lady, whom I wished to conciliate most of all who came, was 'talked at' by a gentleman in a loud voice—loud enough for all the room to hear; another was ridiculed to her face, poor thing! (Well! her head-dress was very odd, certainly—a Madame de Pompadour kind of thing, with a tower of pearls and horsehair behind); a gentleman to whom I was under life-long obligations—one of my dearest friends, indeed—stood at my back for five minutes, while I was using my best energies to fascinate a man I had never seen before, and by whose intrigues and unaccountable enmity my friend had been turned out of a lucrative post somewhere; and I, who did not know one hundredth part of the secret histories enacting before me, made matters ten times worse by the way in which I blundered into all manner of difficulties, and brought in contact all sorts of explosive materials; so that, from the very beginning of the evening, there was discord and disunion. And how could one silly little woman set all these grave disasters straight? Then there were the quiet and untalkative people who would not 'circulate,' but who sat in corners, and on the benches by the doors, expecting others to find them out, and who were particularly ill-used when they were left alone for five minutes, looking reproachfully at me. As if I was to blame for all the stupid isolation they gave themselves! And there were the people of forward manners and very rusty 'small change,' who talked to every one, and said nothing worth hearing, thrusting themselves into every animated group, and dividing couples less animated, but perhaps more interested—interfering without adding, and only irritating,

not amusing; and there were the deaf people, who had to be screamed at; and the low-voiced people, who could scarcely speak above a whisper—and these two always came together: so that what with mental unfitness and personal disharmony I had a troublesome time of it to put things into even the semblance of working order.

Jonathan was worse than unhelpful in these straits. He had attended to nothing all throughout, having, as I have said, lost his temper from the beginning, only finding the most fault where I had taken extra pains to put things nice; but now he made everything worse by his strange conduct. Of course, if we had committed the blunder of asking incongruities together, we must make the best of it, and not show that we knew or suspected anything, and certainly not take sides. The merest good breeding and sacredness of hospitality demanded *that*. But my husband did not think so, and from the first ranged himself as a partisan, paying all manner of attention to some people while entirely neglecting the rest. Consequently I had the sole care of the obnoxious ones, which forced me to assume the attitude of a partisan. This I told him when they had all gone; but he only said I talked nonsense, and used too fine phrases. He is so rude when he is in a bad humour!

But nothing of this was eternal; and there would soon be the supper to cheer us all up, and re-arrange the spirits of the company. Our rooms were far too small to enable us to do anything all this time: we had a little music, certainly, but only one or two waltzes and polkas by young ladies, dreadfully shy, so that this part of the programme counted for nothing. It was getting near to supper-time now—eleven o'clock, so I thought I would just quietly vanish down stairs, and see how my greengrocer's sister was progressing. I had seen enough to be aware that something was not quite right with that individual before tea-time even, but I was far from suspecting the truth. I went down, then, expecting to

find all done, save, perhaps, the last little ornaments, which belong to the mistress; but this is what I found instead; and when you have read it, picture my feelings as the commentary. The exhibition vase of flowers, which I had taken a world of pains with, wreathing the long slender stem with maiden-hair, just like those on the stand in the International, was smashed to pieces; and such of the flowers as were saved thrust pell-mell into a celery-glass which Jonathan had in his bachelor days. And we all know that the arrangement of flowers is everything, making them either graceful adornments or vulgar encumbrances. Then there was the trifle-bowl, hired for the occasion—cost price two pounds sixteen—broken right across, and tied with string, but the wine oozing steadily through the crack, and dripping in heavy drops on the cloth below; jellies were shaking themselves to pieces on the table—some, indeed, wandering over the sides of the dishes, and quivering, like transparent dice, on the cloth; a few—very few—shapes of cream and blancmange, flattened and broken, were returning to their original liquidity—not one of them retaining any completeness or beauty; just one plateful of sandwiches cut, with all the potted meat and ham left out; the lobster-salad mixed and messed as if it had been already rifled and the best parts picked out; no forks, spoons, glasses, or plates at hand—a trayful had just been let fall, and I picked up the fragments of no fewer than three plates—hired—on the dining-room floor; the lemonade, which was to have been superb and iced, according to a new recipe, sour, full of pips, and as warm as boiling water could make it; the claret-cup—my great point of pride—ruined in the preparation, and the borage stuck in with its heels in the air; the lamp smoking—it was a camphine lamp, so I need say no more; while Betsey was standing, limp and helpless, by the door in tears, the greengrocer speaking very thick, and the greengrocer's sister lying incapable across the kitchen

dresser, with the fragments of my ruined supper about her. There was no help for it now: the thing was a failure—a confessed, irrevocable, unconcealed failure!

I went up stairs in undisguised tears, and whispered the news to a few intimate friends, who made the best of it, good-naturedly enough, but who could not give me back my supper, nor prevent those who were not my friends from laughing at me, nor make less than a quarter of what would have been a well-conditioned table do for a party of a hundred and ten, nor yet pay the terrible bills which poured in on us the next week. Bills—oh, such bills! bills for cream and eggs and butter enough to have fed a garrison all swamped into a few liquefying creams and a battered old blancmange!—bills for broken glass and china enough to have re-furnished my china closet—bills for flowers, bills for wines, for lemons and oranges, and for lobsters and groceries—bills for every conceivable thing and every inconceivable—bills that straitened us for weeks and months after; and all for what?—a gigantic failure! But Jonathan said 'it was all my fault, and it served me right; what business had I to attempt more than I could do or had means for? That the thing was a failure was plain enough to the meanest understanding; and though he felt for me a little, yet he was glad of it, for the useful lesson he hoped it would be to me in the future. When I could accept the fact that a poor man's wife might still be a gentlewoman, though she entertained her friends without ostentation, and gave a quiet little tea-drinking instead of a monstrous, ill-done parade like this, I should be a better and a happier woman; but while I was vulgar enough to attempt things beyond my means I should never succeed as a hostess, and would always expose myself to mortification and defeat.'

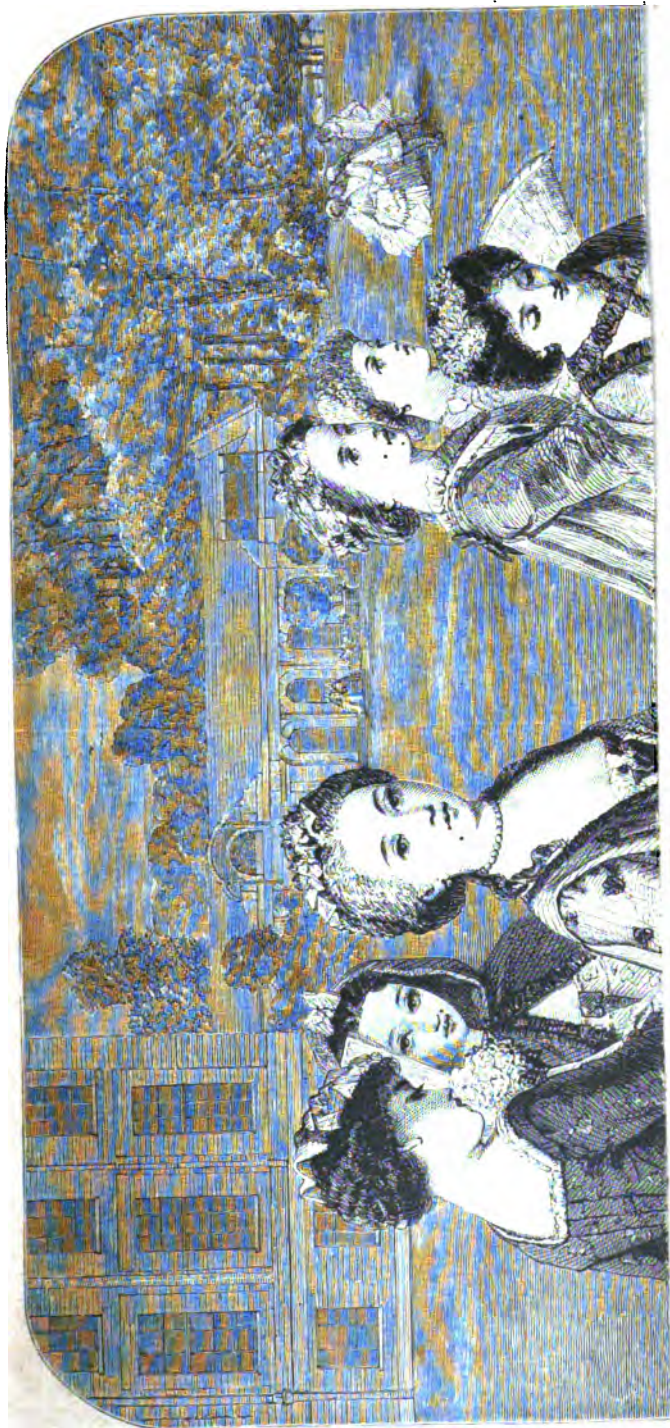
I wonder if Jonathan is right? Perhaps he is, after all! Perhaps simplicity and true hospitality are the best tests of refinement, and these grand attempts with hungry

purses in the background, are follies and vulgarities too; and inevitable failures with all who make them. I think I shall kiss Jonathan when he comes home to-night, and tell him that I have been a sad little goose, and that I am very sorry I did not take his advice from

the first. Poor Jonathan! he is very good on the whole; and, who knows? he may be a better judge than I about some things in life! But what would dear mamma say if she heard me?"

CHARLOTTE BRIGGS,
née MANDEVILLE MONTGOMERY.

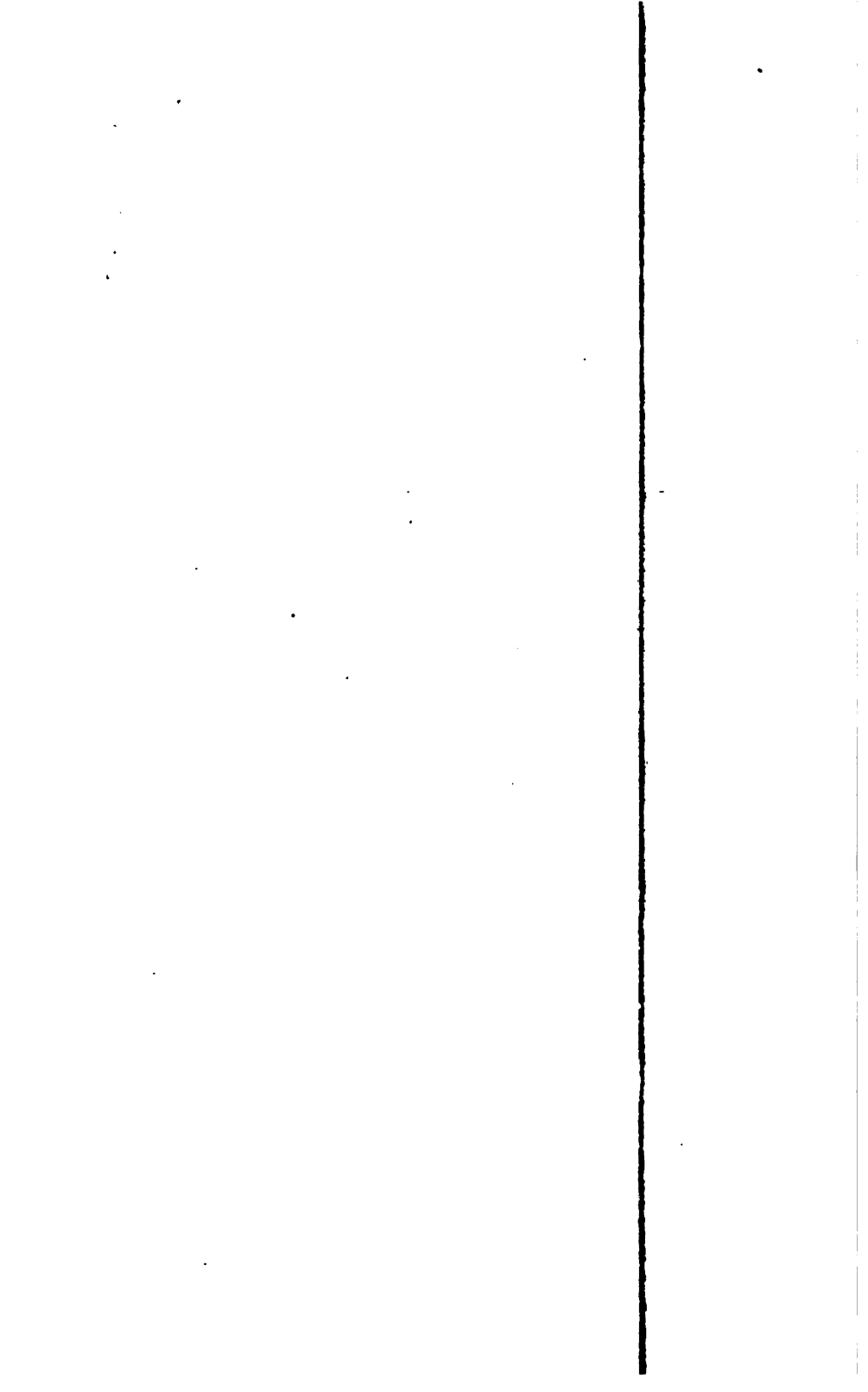




KENSINGTON GARDENS IN THE OLDEN TIME.

From the Painting by Augustus Bouvier.

See "Court-Life Out-of-Doors."



LONDON SOCIETY.

AUGUST, 1864.

TATTERSALL'S.



IN THE SUBSCRIPTION ROOM—SITTING FOR THE "ASCOT."

ONE of the best uses to which the noble art of photography might be put would be the picturing forth all those relics of old London which are inevitably near their fall. Long ere the arrival of that coming man, the contemplative New Zealander, there shall be changes in our midst that will make us marvel—Cockneys as we are—where those changes will stop. Bewildered by their rapidity, we are even now losing count of the time when they began. London, Chatham, and over-rated railway

schemes; Main Drainage operations; Thames Embankment projects; Hotel speculations (limited); Suburban building extensions (unlimited); and the thousand forms of attack known to the Moloch of bricks and mortar, and to his victims, are gathering strength from impunity, as the all-devourer makes the meat he feeds on. Whose turn it may be next to get notice to quit none can tell. Progress taketh no account of the historical and the picturesque, nor heedeth the cries of the sentimentalist, bidding the woodman to spare that tree,

the building contractor to let that chimney stand, the landowner to forbear, and to give up all ideas of improving his property. Sentimentalist had better take a practical view of the matter at once, withdraw his threatened opposition to the vestry board, by whose vote Paradise Row is to be pulled down for local improvements, and simply send in his claim for compensation. Meanwhile, there is one mode of compensation tolerably within reach. Let us have photographic pictures of every bit of street architecture worth remembering—the Tudor houses in Gray's Inn Lane, for example; and the gabled fronts of Staples Inn; and the curiously small 'palace' of Henry VIII. and Cardinal Wolsey, No. 17, Fleet Street, in the front floor of which bijou residence of royalty we may imagine the British Bluebeard having his hair brushed by machinery, while the crafty ecclesiastic is being shaved and shampooed at his master's elbow.

Long may it be before such an institution as Tattersall's shall cease to have a living representative of that name; but the time will be short ere the local habitation shall have changed. This year of grace is the last which will see the old yard, and offices, and subscription-room, and quaint, old-fashioned dwelling of the Messrs. Tattersall, at the 'Corner.' Come, then, with your photographic camera, your collodion, and your bottles of baneful fluid, Mr. Mayall, and catch me that well-known scene before it shifts and changes and flits for ever out of sight and memory. Or let me try, with the photography of words, to make a *carte de visite* of the spot that shall be visited seldom or never again by me. In itself, that spot has altered little in the many years I have known it; but when Tattersall's arose into being, towards the end of the last century, Belgrave Square was 'the Five Fields,' and all that district between Hyde Park and Chelsea was an open, breezy tract of buttercups and daisies, with sheep in the meadows and cows in the corn, and footpads lurking in the narrow

country lanes. There are men now living, hale and hearty enough to follow the hounds, who can recollect the time when partridges were shot hereabout. This was known to be the fact so late as 1812. It was by the great-grandfather of one of the present partners that the establishment was founded. That venerable personage, familiarly called 'Old Tat,' went to his rest full seventy years ago, and slumbers peacefully near Highflyer Hall. 'The Squire is dust; his spurs are rust; his soul is with the saints, I trust.'

It was by 'Old Tat,' in the year 1766, that the ninety-nine years' lease was signed with Lord Grosvenor—that lease which is now drawing to its close, even as the longest leases will. But it was the grandson of 'Old Tat,' whose reign was longest and most gloriously associated with the annals of the Turf. Mr. Richard Tattersall, father of one of the present proprietors and uncle of the other, came to the family throne at the age of twenty-five, and sat there till the time of his death, fifty years afterwards, *Anno Domini* 1858. His reputation is typical of the national character of a sporting gentleman of what is called the *old*, though it is, in truth, the perpetually *young* school. It is a curious atom completing the totality of a life so consistent throughout as that of Richard Tattersall, Esq., that his body should have been committed to the earth on the day of the great race for the Goodwood Cup.

The garrulity of age is a proverb. But it is not only that palsied old itself is garrulous. Ancient localities, ancient landmarks, have something in them that inevitably set us a-talking. An anecdotal atmosphere seems to surround such places as Tattersall's. The last monarch of the little kingdom was, indeed, a noted teller of stories, being one of those central men to whom all the traits and peculiar sayings and characteristic acts of their acquaintance find their way by natural attraction. He was a shrewd judge of man as well as horse, and hardly needed more than the first glance to form a tolerably sound opinion of either.

An honourable point about the man himself was his habit of discouraging the practice of betting—a practice which he might rather have been expected to promote. On his own account he rarely betted at all; and when he did the stake was trifling. Young men who consulted him about becoming subscribers to the Rooms were not sure of a favourable response. They had better keep their money in their pockets, he was wont to tell them;

nor was there the faintest shadow of hypocrisy in his advice, for it is matter of ascertained fact and notoriety that his scruples kept very large sums out of his ledger. It is even supposed that Mr. Richard Tattersall's very strong feelings on the subject of betting led to inconveniences which were the cause of his handing over the management of the Subscription-room to a committee. An astute, decisive, and withal kindly face is that which the portraits of



UNDER THE HAMMER.

this old gentleman, in his declining years, represent. How familiar it must have been to those habitual attendants of the horse-sales, as it looked down on them from the rostrum, and calmly surveyed the chances of another rise in the bidding before the poised hammer was brought down with its irrevocable rap. Excepting the white-haired president, there is nothing to miss from the ordinary scenes at Tattersall's any Thursday in the season, or any great settling day. We will,

an' it please you, reader mine, select such a day for our imaginary visit to the place. Say it is soon after Ascot Races, whither we went so pleasantly, and whence we brought impressions too numerous to find place here. The lane that leads down to the yard is crowded and noisy, with outsiders of every class, from the tolerably respectable bookmaker to the man in ragged huntsman's dress who sells the lists of handicaps. Through this motley throng swells push their way to the Subscription-

room or to the yard, where a stud is being sold. If 'without reserve,' woe to the agent who is detected bidding for the owner; or woe, rather, to this person himself, whose violation of an explicit agreement will find no tolerance here. It is Mr. Richard Tattersall, the son, whom we now see in the rostrum, and who, with his cousin, Mr. Edmund Tattersall, represents the institution which bears the family name. The yard in which the sales are carried on is not more pretending in appearance than the yard of any livery-stables at the West end of London—less so, indeed, than many; but it is jollier. I can think of no better comparative degree which affords at once a difference and a distinction between Tattersall's and other places of the kind. The same air of quiet superiority is perceptible which belongs to the old club-houses, and which is so much more suitable to the idea of aristocratic exclusiveness and reserve than the flashy newness of Italian architecture and plate-glass by which the admiring stare of the popular Argus is attracted. Tattersall's enjoys the same sort of patronage and society as do White's and Boodle's. Its tone is traditional; and there is not a familiar object, however commonplace, that does not fit into the general history of the spot. Oddly dignified with a dome, beneath which is the counterfeit presentment of a fox, the pump in the centre of the yard is otherwise as ordinary-looking as an old wooden pump as you might find at the end of a horse-trough in front of a village inn. But Pegasus might not disdain to drink of the sparkling waters of this classic pump—the Hippocrene of Hyde Park Corner. A sculptured bust surmounts the dome. It is the bust of the Prince Regent, afterwards King George; and it has, like everything else in the yard of Tattersall's, a story. 'Old Tat,' whose son Edmund, father of the late Mr. Richard Tattersall, was associated with the Prince in the proprietorship of the 'Morning Post,' set up the head of his Royal Highness on the top of this pump

when the original—the Prince, not the pump—was seventeen years old. In the course of certain repairs on the premises, the bust was missed, and could not be found till long years had gone by, when it was discovered from a mass of rubbish in a builder's yard, and restored to its place of honour in the yard of Tattersall's. There let us regard it reverentially, wondering in what Pantheon, Walhalla, or Tussaud gathering of heroes the relic will be placed when the removal of the dome-pump shall compel the deposition of the First European Gentleman's bust from its appropriate pedestal.

Across the crowded end of the lane we jostle marquises and stablemen, betters, touts, and inscrutable hangers-on, whose eyes wander with a hungry restlessness from face to face, ever seeking and seldom finding the expression which gives promise of a job. It is wonderful to see the wealth handled by horsey men outside the temple-gate, or, to be exact, the entrance of the Subscription-room. An official, whose business it is to know everybody, stands at the door, and admits those only who have the right to enter. Come, let us mingle with the settlers, and bring them into our photograph. The room is full of them, and so is the little terrace which is gained through a door at the farther end, and which terrace overlooks a circular court, with a grass-plat of the same shape in the midst. The true magnates of the turf are here, though they generally leave the business of settling to their agents, who, with bundles of bank-notes, pay and receive without ceasing, and tick off each transaction from one or other of two columns on a slip of paper. I should like to know how it is that some few trades, which have nothing to do with horse-racing, turn out so many betting-men. That publicans are nearly all up in sporting matters I can understand; but why are bakers and hairdressers peculiarly addicted to giving and taking the odds on any turf event? I have observed that they are so, and that they have little else to talk about during the

racine season; and here, in the Tattersall's penetralia, do I not find that much business is done, on account of a peer of the realm, by a bread and biscuit baker, who is understood to go in largely for book-making on his own account? You will please to remark that the people in the Subscription-room have none of the outward and visible signs of horsiness which characterise most of the outsiders. Indeed, if you wanted to get at the heart of that mystery

of 'well-dressed men,' which is for the most part impenetrable in its rigid simplicity, I should say, go at once to Tattersall's. Eccentricity itself harmonizes here with the perfection of quiet taste. If a slim and elderly personage chooses to wear a long blue tail coat buttoned with brass buttons, and garnished with the same at the cuffs, you are so far from objecting to his costume that you feel it to be the only costume in which he ought properly to ap-



ON THE LAWN.

pear. And where the conservatism of dress is not maintained, sartorial progress is modified with a judgment akin to statesmanship. The tide of wild innovation, of democratic excesses in the matter of stripes and checks, is successfully stemmed by gentlemen who to their several qualifications add the rare capacity which belongs to the promoter of English sport.

'Conservatism;'—I have used the word, and dim recollections of old exercises in rhetoric suggest to me

the value of epanaphora, and the consequent expediency of using it again—is somehow inseparable from turf affairs. I need not adduce the name of Bentinck; for instances hardly less forcible abound. But you will not fail to see that this conservative spirit enters into every little form and fashion, into every habit, every mode of act or speech, in sporting life. So, then, it is not surprising that the personages who fall into our photographic group have one appearance in common by

which they are linked with the past. They don't wear beards. No; that fashion, so bitterly opposed by respectability a few years since, has made its way into the gravest professions; has crept into the Church and gained admission to the Bar; has invaded the Navy, even, in spite of sagacious old admirals who saw in it another proof that 'the service is going to the Deuce,' but has failed to take any standing on the Turf. Where the moustache is cultivated in sporting circles, take notice that it is often grown in company with an 'Imperial' or 'tip,' but very rarely indeed with a full crop of hair upon the chin. Round and smoothly shaven as the face of a comic actor is the face of yonder personage whose height is two or three inches over six feet, whose back is proportionably broad, and whose dealings appear to be, oddly enough, with little men; over whom he bends, book and pencil in hand, like the Norfolk Giant doing business with pigmies. Standing under the tree in the middle of the round grass-plat, or lounging on garden-seats, or sitting on the edges of tables, or leaning against the columns of the verandah, you may see the owners of the most celebrated horses of the day. And you may distinguish also many a character as famous on the stones of London streets as on the Turf. That little man with the wide square chest and shoulders, the muscular arms, the twinkling grey eyes, the broad good-humoured mouth, and the unobtrusive manner, was once a

member of the prize-ring; and in the trade of boxing has slain men. Not only the hardest hitter in modern times, he is the most accomplished of his craft in the double art of planting his blows and avoiding punishment. 'Is,' I say; for though the big arms may lack some of their ancient force, the steady gaze and the marvellous perfection of skill have not, I imagine, abandoned Owen Swift. Away from his calling—or in it, for that matter—a milder, kinder, gentler-hearted man you might search in vain, far and wide, to find.

What tales there are to tell of Tattersall's and of its votaries; what princely fortunes have been lost, and won, and lost again in that small plain-looking room and its circular garden; how, when it had been gravely whispered that Lord So-and-so *must* fail to come up to the scratch, that he *could not* show after such losses as he was known to have sustained, his lordship coolly sauntered in, lit a fresh cigar from the ashes of the one he had smoked out, paid a couple of hundred thousand pounds or more, and booked a few bets for the next great event,—it is not my task to narrate. The sole purpose in view is a picture of Tattersall's, as it is, and as it will shortly cease to be. Already I have travelled somewhat aside from that purpose, and have brought ghosts upon the scene. But do they not, in truth, haunt it? Ah me! where is it that I go and find none, though my path leads elsewhere than Tattersall's?



TOWN TRAVELS.

Travels in Thames Street.



HE curious traveller who ventures, like the wandering writer of these papers, to traverse the highways of commerce in the British metropolis, is sure to gather information by the way which cannot fail to exercise a most depressing influence upon his spirits. There is no denying it (he is told in every direction), business is no longer what it used to be. Once upon a time—whenever that may have been—business was really worthy of its name: there was money to be made out of it; a man was not compelled to work the flesh off his fingers merely to keep out of the Gazette. But now a man might just as well put up his shutters at once and turn Turk as remain in a Christian land where profits are all swallowed up in expenses, and every commercial transaction represents a loss.

Such in spirit, if not in substance, are the complaints which the traveller hears when he journeys among City men and visits their busiest haunts. It is scarcely matter for

surprise, therefore, that if he extends his explorations to the very borders of Billingsgate, similarly disheartening intelligence should await him even in that centre of a vast industry the New Coal Exchange. Indeed, the complaints he will hear there are likely to be more decided in tone than any he will hear elsewhere. What, in fact, could Mr. Bunning, the City architect, have been about when he erected that building only ten years ago or so? What could the Corporation have been about when it supplied the funds with which the edifice was paid for? A music hall was scarcely wanted in Lower Thames Street; Mr. Spurgeon was provided for; and an equestrian circus would not pay, even though the *dames de la Hulle* opposite supported it to the extent of their means. What, then, could this elegant and commodious building have been erected for? Certainly not for any coal trade requiring such accommodation. For, speak with any of the three or four hundred gentlemen who congregate here, and what will you hear? Why, you will hear, in the forcible and yet figurative language which City gentlemen delight to use, that there is no coal trade;—that it has gone to the dogs;—is done up;—smashed;—rotten;—on its last legs;—and not worth a rap.

Here, for instance, we are at the Coal Exchange itself; and here is an intelligent, sharp-witted looking gentleman to whom we are personally known. Let us speak with him upon this subject. He owes no grudge to the world, and the world owes him none; he is not bilious, and, as times go, has as good a digestion as most men, though he believes in Cockle's pills, and keeps a supply of that priceless family medicine among his shirt-collars. Yet how he bursts out, how he bristles, how he detonates, how he perks up at the mere mention of the trade to which he

belongs. Commodore Trunnion, in his famous interview with the exciseman, could scarcely have been more rigorously vituperative.

'Coal trade, sir!' he exclaims, and the stream of his eloquence is stopped by a dam—a dam of irrelevant ejaculations. 'Coal trade, sir!' he says again in a minute or two. 'Don't talk about it. It isn't worth talking about. It won't bring a man bread and cheese. Look at this place! Examine it! Cast your eye over it! Does it look like a place where a man can get bread and cheese?'

There was an announcement in one corner of the room that Bass's pale ale could be obtained on draught or in bottle, and that Melton Mowbray pork pies might be had fresh. I thought it only fair to assume, therefore, that the more frugal fare he alluded to could be obtained also. I should have pointed this out to my friend, but he went on before I had time to deliver myself.

'Coal trade, sir!' he exclaimed, for the third and last time. 'The coal trade is all U P. Bellows-mending would pay better.'

Having no personal knowledge of the industry to which he alluded, and being unprovided with statistics referring to its operations, I was compelled to accept uncomplainingly the information my friend conveyed to me. And certainly, when I looked around the hall in which I stood, the mere external appearance of things was in favour of his assertion that the coal trade had no longer any existence.

And here let me be frank with the reader. In visiting the Coal Exchange I did not expect to see coal in bulk being bought and sold. I did not expect to see half-hundred-weight sacks standing on the floor, or superior qualities sampled in brown paper bags. I did not expect to see placards with 'Try our Wall's-ends at 1s. 10d.;' or, 'Look here! Down again to 1s. 6d.,' inscribed upon them. I did not expect to find wholesale merchants resembling retail dealers, or anticipate that there would be many features of external similarity between

the coal-broker and the coal-whipper. But I *did* expect that, inasmuch as samples of wheat, barley, oats, and peas are displayed in Mark Lane, so samples of Buddle's West Hartley, South Peareth, Tanfield Moor, and Walker Primrose, whatever they may be, would be displayed in Lower Thames Street. But no! In a Coal Exchange coal was the one substance nowhere seen. There wasn't ever a knob!

Outwardly, therefore, as I have said, there was very little indication of business; and, for aught I could see to the contrary, the coal trade might really have been as extinct as the megalonyx.

'Well,' said I, 'when my modest consumption necessitates the introduction of fresh stores into the cellar I know very well how I buy coal, but I can't, for the life of me, tell how you buy it.'

'Well, we buy it in this manner,' he replied, evidently forgetting for the moment, in his earnestness, that the trade was in a shattered, not to say a despairing condition; 'we buy—but first of all you see that this is a circular building.'

The fact was so obvious that I take no credit to myself for having already observed it before he spoke.

'Well, you see these desks following the circumference of the building here on the ground-floor. They are the desks of the factors, and the factors are intermediary agents between the colliery owner and the coal merchant, receiving a commission for what they sell like brokers in the colonial trade.'

'Precisely. They sell: but how do you buy?'

My friend made no reply, but took me to one of the desks and told me to look at it. I did. It was apparently of deal, painted black; an inkstand was sunk into it; pens were lying about; and upon a bed of blotting-paper a handbill or circular was reposing, partly written and partly printed.

'Read that,' said my friend, pointing to the handbill or circular.

I read it, and found that it ran something as follows:—

'BLAKE, FIELDING, and Co., per
"Star of the East."

'Ravensworth . . .	245
Sleekburn . . .	180
Straker . . .	140
Acorn Close . . .	240'

'There,' said my friend, triumphantly, when I had finished the perusal of this intelligible and instructive document, 'that's how we buy coals!'

It might be that my intellect was somewhat cloudy, it might be that the explanation was deficient in clearness, but if my friend had told me that he bought coals by thinking of the frosty Caucasus, or by wishing himself with Nancy, I should have been just as enlightened.

However, I said in reply, with an expression of acute sagacity culminating in a business-like wink, 'Oh! that's how you buy coal, is it? Ah! I see; those figures—'

'Precisely; those figures indicate the number of tons offered, and the name indicates the pit they come from.'

'But do you never have samples?'

'No. We are acquainted with all the coal brought to the market; and when a new coal is introduced we buy it on the representations made to us by the factors; representations which of course determine its price.'

'Then it is not until you have the coal in your own hands that you really know its quality. And what is the amount of business annually transacted here in this curious manner?'

'Last year it amounted to about 3½ millions of tons.'

'Well,' said I, 'for a trade that is on its last legs that total doesn't seem bad. Somebody must get a living out of this decayed and deplorable industry.'

But my friend was not to be shaken by any such shallow reasoning and impertinent banter as this. He smiled, it is true, but it was a resigned and melancholy smile; and then, pensive and subdued, he led me to the upper gallery, and showed me the museum of the institution.

It was deeply interesting. Every variety of coal was displayed there;

coal from Borneo; coal from Prussia; coal from New Zealand; coal from Sweden; coal from Newcastle. There were specimens of the beautiful Albertite, black as jet, and with a rich, lustrous polish upon it that told of its bituminous character. Then there were examples of the delicate crystallized coal from Merthyr Tydvil, looking as though it had been prepared for exhibition as a curious illustration of manual skill. Then in other cases were specimens bearing the impress of fern leaves and flowers as distinctly as though stamped by a die. What a contrast when we emerged from this quiet little sanctuary of science into the large bustling hall devoted to trade!

And the market, too, was at its busiest. Nominally, it is supposed to last only an hour, viz., from one o'clock to two. As a mere matter of fact, however, it lasts longer, and does not close until about three. Just now it is a quarter to two, and accordingly a bell rings loudly. No one knows why it rings; no one can guess why it rings: but custom ordains that it shall ring, and it does ring. That if it failed to ring business would come to a standstill is perhaps too much to assert: but that a terrible judgment would overtake the beadle if he neglected this time-honoured duty is, I think, more than probable.

Really, for a place serving as the centre of a defunct, or, at all events, a moribund trade, the Coal Exchange exhibits a vast amount of business animation. Some three or four hundred gentlemen are gathered together talking about prices and shipments and arrivals; the factors are all at their desks, quite prepared to open up negotiations or to conclude bargains, and behind them patient mariners and skippers from the North are awaiting the result of sales and the instructions as to the delivery of cargo which will follow those sales. There are even visitors in the galleries looking down upon the busy crowd below; and their presence seems to give additional importance to the scene.

I suppose my face must have kindled as I became impressed with

the business aspect of the place, for my glance fell when my eyes met those of a kindly but melancholy-looking gentleman to whom I had been introduced shortly before, and who had been the most pathetic of all in his lamentations over the decline and fall of the London coal trade. He had divined my thoughts. Had I told him what was passing through my mind the information would have been utterly superfluous.

'It looks like business, doesn't it?' he asked.

I assented enthusiastically.

'Ah!' he exclaimed, with a sigh, 'you are like all the rest. Do you remember the colliers' strike which took place some years ago?'

I did not; and said so.

'Well, during that strike the coal-whippers had nothing to do, so they sat on the barges all day long and played at cards. The factors and merchants here in like manner had nothing to do, and some of them actually went back to the sports of their boyhood and played at marbles upon the floor of this, or rather of the old Exchange, as an innocent if not exciting way of employing their time. Well, sir,' he added, quite gravely, 'if they were all to set to now and play at marbles again, or "Egg-hat," or "Fly-the-garter," or "Buck, buck, how many horns do I hold up?" they would be almost as well occupied as they are at present.'

These words were spoken in such an obvious tone of earnestness that it was impossible not to believe in their sincerity—impossible not to be depressed by the melancholy picture they brought before the mental eye. There was a kindly expression, too, upon the speaker's face, which not only repelled mistrust but invited sympathy. I felt that I was defeated, disarmed; and my new acquaintance noting my surrender, enticed me with a glance, took me by the arm, and led me out of the building.

I had no idea where we were going, or why we were going; but I felt I was in sympathetic hands and that no harm could befall me. Comforted and soothed by this con-

viction, I silently walked by the side of my conductor.

We left Lower Thames Street; we turned our backs upon Billingsgate; we ascended a gentle eminence; we halted on the threshold of a modest building. Speaking accurately, it was an office or counting-house. There was an inscription on the lintel. My friend bade me read it. I did so and thus the inscription ran:—'Mr. —, Wine Merchant.' An indescribable feeling of repose, of contentment, of ecstasy stole over me. A thousand fair visions rose before my eyes; a thousand echoes as of corks, softly drawn by fairy fingers, glided into my ear, like far-off strains of melody. I was in a sort of delicious trance.

I scarcely remember what immediately followed. I have a sort of dreamy recollection that my friend produced a tea-cloth, that he produced some glasses, that he produced a corkscrew, that he produced a bottle. An age seemed to elapse; then followed a sharp detonation, and at last came a soft gurgling sound as of captive rapture at escape from long imprisonment.

Qu'ils sont doux,
Bouteille jolie,
Qu'ils sont doux,
Vos jolis glougloux!
Mais mon sort ferait bien des jaloux,
Si vous étiez toujours remplie;
Ah bouteille, ma mie,
Pourquoi vous videz-vous ?

Instinctively I raised my glass to the light; my friend did the same. We looked at our wine—we looked at each other. We closed the right eye—we opened the lower lip; when our next breath was drawn the two glasses were empty.

The memory of that delicious moment will never be effaced from my mind. I felt that I had made the acquaintance of a kindred spirit—of a man of enlarged and generous views, deep feelings, and profound convictions; of a practical philanthropist; in a word, who in an age of drinking-fountains, had yet the courage to believe in Portuguese brands. There could be no doubt about it; he who had such port in his cellar could be no ordinary man.

And my friend was no ordinary man. Yet his history was simple. Years before, he too had been in the coal trade; but by an instinctive discernment, belonging only to great minds, he saw that that trade was doomed. He gave up Walls-ends, therefore, and took to wines. Early associations could not, however, be rudely severed, and he continued to linger near the scene of his former avocations. His heart had yet a yearning for coal; claret had not wholly usurped the place in his affections formerly given to coke. He still, therefore, attended the market of which he is no longer a member, and when he sees its regular frequenters losing heart, or in danger of fainting by the way, he leads them to his little office, consoles with them, bids them be of good cheer, and puts the corkscrew to its noblest uses. There should be a monument to such a man if it were formed only of empty bottles.

But it is waxing late. We must tear ourselves away from our generous host, and take just another glance at the Coal Exchange.

It is all but deserted now. The skippers have sheered off (to speak nautically), the factors have closed their accounts, the merchants have, for the most part, retreated to their counting-houses, even the beadle has quitted a scene where his presence would seem like a satire or a sham. There is only one individual, in fact, left here—a pensive, melancholy man—and him I accost for lack of other companionship.

To my surprise, I find that, although outwardly sombre, he is inwardly sunny, and that, although connected with coals, he looks by no means despondently upon their future. I at once begin to regard this hopeful person with admiration, and the painful thought flashes across me, that perhaps I have formed a too hasty judgment upon the coal trade from the gloomy reports I have previously heard. So I introduce myself to this gentleman, and as he is proceeding westward, and as he is proceeding westward, and my course is N.W., we split a point of the compass and sally forth together.

In the course of conversation, I find he is the representative of what may be called a new development of the coal trade. He is the agent of an extensive colliery near Chesterfield, and although he attends the Coal Exchange, it is more for the purpose of watching the market than of buying and selling. He is wholly unconnected with the trade in sea-borne coal, and deals only in that brought to London by railway, and which is comprehensively known as Inland. And now I begin to feel interested, for in common, I suppose, with the mass of mankind, I have always pinned my faith to sea-borne coal, and felt that contempt for Inlands which a connoisseur in *Eau de vie de Cognac* may be supposed to entertain for British brandy. So I say in a friendly, but depreciatory tone, 'Ah! Inland coal is all very well, but of course there's nothing like Wall's-ends.'

'Do you know what Wall's-ends are?' he asked drily.

'No,' said I; 'but I know that they are a particularly good sort of coal.'

'Well, there are almost seventy varieties of that particularly good sort of coal, or rather, seventy different collieries have adopted the name; and yet, strictly speaking, there is no such coal as Wall's-ends.'

I staggered and grew dizzy. The very basis of my belief in coal had suddenly been overturned. A conviction cherished from my tenderest years had been rudely torn asunder. Had I heard that the British constitution was being sold for waste paper, or that the rose had ceased to blow, I could not have been more surprised.

'What I mean is,' said my friend, 'that the mine which first yielded the coal called Wall's-end, and which took its name from being near the end of the old Roman wall, has long ceased to be worked, and that other mines have merely adopted the name on account of its popularity. If we called our Inland coal Wall's-end, it would be just as much so as anybody else's.'

'But,' said I, 'is there then no difference between Inland and the coal called Wall's-end?'

'I do not quite say that. I simply say that the mere name indicates nothing.'

'Well!' I exclaimed, slightly recovering from my astonishment, 'I always thought sea-borne coals the best.'

'So do most people; but there again you are heeding a mere name. Sea-borne, of course, can only mean carried by sea. But are you aware that plenty of coal is brought full twenty miles by land before it reaches the sea? It is mere contiguity which determines mode of conveyance. We might, if we pleased, ship our coals at Grimsby and bring them to London in collier-brigs. They would then, of course, be sea-borne. Instead of that we bring them by rail and they are inland at once.'

'The fact is,' continued my new friend, 'the dislike to inland coal arises from mere prejudice, or, to speak more correctly, from mere ignorance, which is only now giving way. Somewhere about twenty years ago we brought inland coal to London for the first time. Nobody would buy it. For years our trade was utterly insignificant. Well, after a while, the Great Northern Railway began to sell inland coal. The result, at first, was much the same. At last there came a hard winter, and sea-borne coal rose to *forty shillings* a ton. This was our opportunity. The Great Northern Railway Company at once advertised that it would sell its coal throughout the entire winter at *twenty shillings* a ton. People then began to believe in inland coal, and the trade was fairly started. In my opinion, it is only yet in its infancy, but you may judge of its development when I tell you that the colliery I represent, alone sent about

300,000 tons to London in 1862; and that the total sent by others in the same year amounted to more than a million tons. Why, we ourselves pay from 6,000*l.* to 7,000*l.* per month for railway carriage, and I have no doubt we shall pay twice as much some day. For you see our prices remain much the same all the year round, land-carriage being unaffected by wind and weather. Whereas during the prevalence of certain gales the colliers are unable to put to sea, and the market being ill-supplied, prices go up.'

'Then,' said I, 'the general complaint at the Coal Exchange is not altogether without cause. Trade is at all events in a transition state here.'

My friend nodded assentingly, and said, 'Yes, with a tendency to concentrate itself in the hands of a few great firms.'

'But now tell me,' said I, 'is not the quality of sea-borne coal better as a matter of fact, and not of fancy, than that brought by railway?'

'It is very often better,' was the candid reply, 'especially when a high price is charged for it. It cannot be denied, too, that some of the inland coal is full of seam, useless for the purposes of combustion, and which deposits itself in dirty ash. Nevertheless, inland coal can be obtained in London and its outskirts, which I think quite as good as Wall's-end, and which I always burn.'

There was no need to show me a price list; I understood the hint without it.

'Then, *your* coal has no ash, I suppose,' was my reply, in a tone of indifference.

'Try it,' he said with a smile. And I have tried it.

E. C.



COURT-LIFE OUT-OF-DOORS.

THERE is a picture in the Exhibition of the Institute of Painters in Water-Colours—'The Maids of Honour of the Princess of Wales,' by Mr. Augustus Bouvier, which so pleasantly recalls the out-of-door court life of a hundred and forty years ago—the life celebrated in sparkling verse and brightest prose by Addison and Pope, and Swift and Gay—that we have asked the painter to allow us to engrave it for the current number of 'London Society.'

A passage in Leigh Hunt's genial little volume, 'The Old Court Suburb,' serves the painter as his motto—and perhaps suggested the first idea of his picture. But the ultimate inspiration comes from the 'Kensington Gardens' of Tickell. It is after a lively analysis of these too-tedious rhymes that Hunt proceeds to tell who are 'the Virgin Band,' Caroline's Maids of Honour, who 'breathe in sunshine' along the Kensington walks—

'Where rich brocades and glossy damasks glow,
And chints, the rival of the showery bow.'

'There is Miss Hobart, the sweet-tempered and sincere; Miss Howe, the giddiest of the giddy; Margaret Bellenden, who vied in height with her royal mistress; the beautiful Mary Bellenden her sister; Mary Lepell, the lovely; and Anne Pitt, sister of the future Lord Chatham.' In quoting the passage, Mr. Bouvier has omitted Leigh Hunt's brief comment on the fortune of each passing fair; and, as we shall presently make some fuller comments of our own, we follow his example.

These, then, are the Maids of Honour, famous in song, whom the painter has thus prettily grouped together. Their royal mistress is not among them. Yet had the painter been faithful to the verse, she would have been centre of the throng, cynosure of every eye. For, as the Kensington songster warbles melodiously—

'Here England's Daughter, darling of the land,
Sometimes surrounded with her Virgin Band,
Gleams through the shades. She towering o'er
the rest,
Stands fairest of the fairer kind contest.'

But it may be that,—recollecting that she, darling of the land as she may have been, was not quite so young as her fair attendants, that small-pox had not left her cheeks quite unscathed, and that, as 'cette diablesse Madame la Princesse,' as her royal father-in-law used affectionately to designate her, was of a somewhat coarse and pungent temperament, there might be some indication of it in her countenance,—the painter feared that when she was seen towering o'er the rest in his picture, she might not prove so fascinating in 1864 as when she 'charmed the land' in 1720.

The scene is the Broad Walk in Kensington Gardens, the Palace serving as the background of the picture and identifying the locality. Whether in the reign of the First George the house and gardens looked quite so much like what they do in the reign of Victoria is for Mr. Bouvier to say. It is certain that they only attained their present dimensions by degrees. Kensington in 1690 first became a royal palace. William III. preferred Hampton Court for a residence before any of the royal dwellings. But in the days when roads were miry and railways were not dreamed of Hampton Court was found too far off from the Houses of Parliament and the public offices for the transaction of business, and William could not live in London. Kensington was accordingly fixed on as a convenient intermediate distance. At first Holland House seemed likely to be the sovereign's choice. He not only visited and examined it, but even resided for some time in it. Ultimately, however, the preference was given to Kensington House, the seat of Finch, Earl of Nottingham, which

was purchased for eighteen thousand guineas. To the building William added the King's Gallery, in the south front: the east front was built by George I. In William's time the gardens were only twenty-six acres in extent; but the king spent a great deal of money in laying them out in the Dutch taste. Anne added thirty acres, and had them re-cast by Mr. Wise in a manner that drew plaudits from Addison. Caroline was, however, the great improver of Kensington Gardens, to which she added three hundred acres, filched for the purpose out of Hyde Park. Her gardening feats here, at Kew, and at Richmond, were declared to be the wonder of the age. But her improvements at Kensington were all made after her husband became king. At the date of our picture 'Kensington Gardens were pretty much as in the days of Anne.

There was no queen in England in the reign of the first George. She who should have been our queen was immured far away in the dismal prison at Aldham, and her name was never permitted to be uttered. The Princess of Wales presided over such court as was kept, and had her circle of state attendants and maids of honour. On the whole, it was not a very lively court, and the position of the favoured ladies would not seem to have been particularly enviable. Pope, who was in the confidence of the most charming of them, thus writes, a little before the period of the picture:—'I met the prince, with all his ladies, on horseback, coming home from hunting. Mrs. B[ellenden] and Mrs. L[epell] took me into protection, and gave me a dinner, with something I liked better—an opportunity of conversation with Mrs. H[oward]. We all agreed that the life of a Maid of Honour was of all things the most miserable, and wished that every woman who envied it had a specimen of it. To eat Westphalia ham in a morning; ride over hedges and ditches on borrowed hacks; come home in the heat of the day with a fever, and (what is worse a hundred times) with a red mark in the forehead from an uneasy hat: all this may

qualify them to make excellent wives for fox-hunters. As soon as they can wipe off the sweat of the day, they must simmer an hour and catch cold in the princess's apartment; from thence (as Shakespeare has it) "to dinner, with what appetite they may;" and after that, till midnight, walk, work, or think, which they please. I can easily believe no lone house in Wales, with a mountain and a rookery, is more contemplative than this court; and, as a proof of it, I need only tell you Mrs. L[epell] walked all alone with me three or four hours by moonlight, and we met no creature of any quality but the king, who gave audience to the vice-chamberlain, all alone, under the garden wall.'

This was at Hampton Court: but the life at Kensington would be nearly the same, except, perhaps, as to the hunting. Lord Hervey—and no man knew it better—corroborates all that is said of the tedium of a court life under the first two Georges. And Lord Lyttelton, some years later, wrote a still more disparaging account of 'those poor persecuted damsels the Maids of Honour, the common hackneys of drawing-room parade,' as he ungallantly designates them.

But the Maids themselves, judging from the stories told of them, and their letters, of which there are several in the 'Suffolk Correspondence,' were anything but discontented with their position. They were, in truth, a light-hearted, sprightly bevy. Holding a prominent place about the person of the first lady of the land; chosen from the best families, as they well knew, on account of their personal charms, and favoured with the most favourable opportunities of displaying them—what ladies of sixteen to twenty would murmur at such a lot?—however they might humour the whimsies of a splenetic poet over a social chicken, or in a lone walk of three hours by moonlight—both circumstances, by-the-way, that say something for the licence allowed them: think of the loveliest of the Maids of Honour of Queen Victoria indulging in such free doings! Perhaps it was this freedom out of court hours, and the

gaiety of the out-of-door life, which compensated the tedium of the unchanging mill-horse circle, as Lord Hervey describes it, of the in-door life at court.

Any way, it is this out-of-door life the picture deals with. For sufficient reasons, no doubt, the painter has represented the Maids of Honour alone. No wondering crowd, no admiring beaux, nor prince, nor peer, nor bard, nor wit. Only there away in the distance is a minor group of two court dames exchanging stately courtesies with a couple of court gentlemen, the farther of whom, by his clumsy form and stiff and solemn bow, would seem to be no less a personage than the king himself.

The central figure of the principal group, clad in a white flowered brocade, with folded fan in one hand and a pet poodle under her left arm, it is needless to say, is the matchless Lepell, the loveliest, brightest, wittiest, and wisest of the virgin band. She is a blonde, and on her fair hair a little cap is set coquettishly. A charming smile well becomes lips ruddier than the cherry—and note, ladies, how prettily the pink bow and trimmings 'carry off' the bright bloom of lips and cheeks. Hoops as she wears them almost appear graceful; and the tiny black patch placed so tellingly on the right side of the chin seems in her fairly entitled to be called a beauty-spot.

Mary Lepell, 'Youth's youngest daughter, sweet Lepell,' as Gay calls her in his 'Pope's Welcome from Greece,' was the daughter of Brigadier-General Lepell, and was born in 1700. Her beauty, vivacity (she had a little French blood in her veins), and wit were the theme of unmix'd admiration. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu is as warm in her praises as Pope or Gay. Voltaire when here acknowledged her supremacy in some very pretty verses he addressed to her in *English*. She married, in 1720, Lord Hervey—Pope's Lord Fanny, the author of those amazing 'Memoirs' which throw as piercing and terrible a light on the court and private life of our George II. as the

'Memoirs' of St. Simon do on the court and private life of Louis XIV. The marriage of 'Hervey the handsome' to 'the beautiful Molly Lepell' was commemorated in a ballad concocted by Chesterfield, Pulteney, and Swift, but unquotable from its indecency. Lady Hervey lived till 1768, having been complimented in her old age by Churchill at the expense of 'currish Pope,' and on her death mourned in unaffected terms by Horace Walpole. To the last, he says, 'her house was one of the most agreeable in London; whilst her own friendliness, good breeding, and amiable temper had attached all that knew her.' What other English beauty ever had so brilliant and so long a career, and so lasting a fame?

Over the rest of the group we may glance more rapidly. The lady on the extreme left, of whom we see only the back and neck and side-face, is 'Miss Hobart, the sweet-tempered and sincere (now become Mrs. Howard, afterwards Lady Suffolk).' Thus writes Leigh Hunt; and Mr. Bouvier necessarily follows him. But the lady, 'now Mrs. Howard,' could not have been at this time one of the Maids of Honour; though, as we see by Pope's letters, and her own 'Correspondence,' she was the constant associate of the wittiest among them. She had married, been made a lady of the bedchamber and confidante of the princess, and had become, or was in a fair way of becoming, mistress of the prince. Whether as Mrs. Howard or the Countess of Suffolk she was courted, loved, and praised by every one in her lifetime; and in our own day she has found a gallant admirer in Thackeray, and her reputation a sturdy champion in Wilson Croker. The painter has made her a dark beauty with frizzed black hair, and clothed her in dark-blue flowered chintz. Her somewhat grave expression of countenance contrasts strongly with the merry, dimpled face and laughing eyes which shine out from beneath the little grey hood seen immediately to the right of her.

This is 'Miss Sophia Howe, the giddiest of the giddy,' and the most

unfortunate. Her history is told in three lines. The daughter of General Emanuel Howe, by Ruperta, natural daughter of Prince Rupert, she early received the appointment of Maid of Honour to the Princess Caroline; in the dangerous atmosphere of the court gave unrestrained play to her natural levity; fell a victim to the libertine Antony Lowther, brother of Viscount Lonsdale; and died in 1726 of a broken heart. She is the lady to whom Pope addressed the lines, 'What is Prudery?' Some characteristic letters written in the heyday of her happiness to Mrs. Howard are in the 'Suffolk Correspondence.' In one she writes, 'I am just come from Farnham Church, where I burst out laughing the moment I went in.' The Duchess of St. Albans told her she should not do so—that such behaviour in a church was one of the worst things she could do. 'I beg your Grace's pardon,' was her saucy answer; 'I can do a great many worse things:' as she did, and bitterly paid for.

The lady stooping to play with her spaniel—one of the true King Charles's breed—on the right of the fair Lepell is 'Anne Pitt, sister of the future Lord Chatham,' and 'as like him,' says Horace Walpole, 'as two drops of fire.' She is dressed—how ladies are dressed is always the first thing to be told of them, is it not, Madam?—she is dressed in 'a peach-blossom shot silk, has dark frizzed hair, and a somewhat sombre face. But why has the painter given her face so grave a cast? Is it because her brother was so solemn? Anne Pitt, as Croker notes, 'was remarkable in society even to old age for her sprightliness of conversation, and her *bon-mots* were celebrated.' But possibly Mr. Bouvier has authority for what he has done.

The two maidens behind Anne Pitt are Gay's 'two lovely sisters hand in hand'—

'Madge Bellenden, the tallest of the land,
And smiling Mary, soft and fair as down.'

They are the daughters of John, second Lord Bellenden. In the picture, Madge, the left of the two, but sufficiently distinguished by her height, is a blonde, with flaxen hair prettily set off with blue ribbons; her dress a yellow brocade. She has a lovely, lively Scottish face, on which she has set a couple of little patches, one on the right of her mouth, a lesser one on her chin. Her sister on the left is like her—with a difference: has features pretty, no doubt, but somewhat insipid, and reddish hair. The painter should have transposed the heads. Margaret Bellenden was noted mainly for her tallness; Mary was, as Walpole says, 'above all for universal admiration. Her face and person were charming—lively she was almost to *étourderie*, and so agreeable that she was never mentioned by her contemporaries but as *the most perfect creature they had ever known*.' Her beauty subjected her to some insults, but she knew how to repel them. When the Prince of Wales, in his coarse way, made unseemly advances, she, as she herself mentions, crossed her arms, and compelled him to draw back. On another occasion, when he had the impudence to count out his guineas, the indignant lady struck his purse out of his hand, and walked out of the room, leaving the brutal sensualist staring in stupid amazement. To rid herself of his importunities, she married (like her friend Mary Lepell, secretly and about the same time) Colonel John Campbell, thereby giving deadly offence to the prince. Colonel Campbell became Duke of Argyle in 1761; but Mary Bellenden was dead long before (1736). Her son, however, became duke in due time; and it is believed that she bequeathed a share of her beauty as a family heir-loom.





SIGNORA STORACE.

IN THE CHARACTER OF EUPHROSYNE (MILTON'S MASQUE OF "COMUS.")

From the Painting by De Wilde.

See "London Opera Directors."



THE LONDON OPERA DIRECTORS :

A SERIES OF CURIOUS ANECDOTIC MEMOIRS OF THE PRINCIPAL MEN CONNECTED
WITH THE DIRECTION OF THE OPERA ;
THE INCIDENTS WHICH DISTINGUISHED THEIR MANAGEMENT ;
WITH REMINISCENCES OF CELEBRATED COMPOSERS AND THE LEADING SINGERS
WHO HAVE APPEARED BEFORE THE BRITISH PUBLIC.

By the Author of 'Queens of Song.'



MADAME MARA AS 'ARMIDA.'

(From the Painting by P. Jean.)

CHAPTER IV.

PART II.

PACCHIEROTTI — THE AFFAIRS OF THE
THEATRE IN A STATE OF ENTANGLE-
MENT — OPERA COMPOSERS — TAYLOR
PROPRIETOR AND CRAWFORD MANAGER
— THE ELDER AND YOUNGER VESTRIS
— LE GRAND PETROT — GALLINI AND
HARRIS TAKE POSSESSION OF THE KING'S
THEATRE — QUARRELS BETWEEN RAU-
ZINI AND SACCHINI : THE LATTER QUITS
ENGLAND — GALLINI : HIS STRANGE
CHARACTER — MADAME MARA — SIGNORA
STORACE — MARCHESI — M^{LE}. GUIMARD,
VOL. VI. — NO. XXXIII.

THE DANCER — THE OPERA-HOUSE BURNT
— OPERAS AT THE PANTHEON — MADAME
BANTI — FOUNDATION OF A NEW OPERA-
HOUSE. — [1773 — 1790.]

MESSRS. Harris and Sheridan en-
gaged as their chief singer
Gasparo Pacchierotti. He was pre-
ceded by such a brilliant reputation
that the public awaited his arrival
with eager anticipation. He was
one of the finest singers then known,
and had the most extraordinary
power of penetrating the hearts of
his audience, despite his unprepos-
I

sessing plain face and tall, awkward figure. The natural tone of his voice was deliciously clear, and singularly pathetic. He not only executed the most soft and touching music, but the most difficult passages. To a prolific fancy he joined a pure taste and correct judgment. In his art he was a perfect enthusiast.

At the end of the season, 1778-9, an alarming balance appeared against the property. Mr. Harris, wishing to dispose of his share, assigned it to Mr. Sheridan, at the

personal request of that gentleman, in preference to Mr. Gallini, who was also desirous of becoming a purchaser, and who offered to pay down a sum exceeding the original price. Sheridan shortly afterwards relinquished the entire establishment to Mr. Taylor, for a large sum. In November, M. le Texier was displaced from his position as manager, and Crawford appointed, with the assistance of a gentleman who had had thirty years' experience.

At this time the leading composers for the opera were Traetta, a young



PACCHIEROTTI.

Neapolitan, who had arrived in 1776; Bertoni, who had come with Pacchierotti; and Vento, who had been invited by Giardini. Vento was greatly admired, and earned large sums. He was so parsimonious that there was every reason to suppose he would leave a respectable fortune to his wife and her mother; but when he died, 'by some strange disposition of his property and effects,' nothing could be found, and his widow and her mother were left totally destitute, being reduced to maintaining themselves by the lowest menial labour, and some charitable subscriptions.

In 1780, Pacchierotti came again

to London. Until 1782, Taylor was proprietor, and Crawford manager. In 1781, the elder and the younger Vestris arrived. Since the time of Mdle. Heinel, no dancer had achieved such success as these two famous men. When Pacchierotti sang, nobody considered that the business of the stage interfered with conversation, 'or even to animated narrative and debate;' but while the elder Vestris was on the stage, if, during a *pas seul*, 'any of his admirers forgot themselves so much as to applaud him with their hands, there was an instant check put to their rapture by a choral hush! For those lovers of music who

talked the loudest when Pacchierotti was singing a pathetic air, or making an exquisite close, were now thrown into agonies of displeasure, lest the graceful movements *du dieu de la danse*, or the attention of his votaries, should be disturbed by audible approbation.' Thus speaks Dr. Burney, wrathfully. Young Vestris was regarded with scarcely inferior admiration. He owed his celebrity to springing very high, coming down on one toe, and turning round thereon very slowly, while the other was stretched out horizontally. He was about twenty years of age, and always wore light blue, which became a fashion, under the name of Vestris blue. He was the pupil of his father, and one day a nobleman remarked to the great master that 'his son was a better dancer than he.' 'Very true, my lord,' replied the dancer; 'but my son had a better master than I had.' The elder Vestris was then past the zenith of his glory, but nothing could be more graceful than his attitudes. The peculiarity of his style was that when he entered the stage, he turned a pirouette, then descended on one leg, remaining firmly for some time in the same position. The anecdotes related of his insolence are truly ludicrous. Another dancer who was much admired at this time was le grand Petrot, whose arrogance was proverbial at all the courts of Europe. At Vienna he chose to appear only in the last act of a ballet, and when the Emperor desired that he should dance at the end of the first act, he answered, disdainfully, that 'men of talent never make themselves too cheap.' The stories told of his audacity are scarcely to be credited. One of the least of his impertinences was committed while he was here as ballet-master. He happened to have some dispute with Fierville, and threatened to kick him if he did not obey his orders; then, turning round, he said, 'If there is any stupid lord, or gentleman, who pretends to judge of the merits of a dancer, without knowing how to pull off their hats, shall dare to take your part, Petrot will prove that he can use his sword as well as his legs.' This eccentric

personage having been reduced, by acts of imprudence, to the utmost necessity, was entrusted by Le Pic with his pupils, during the absence of that distinguished master in Russia: this brought him in 800*l.* a year. Being again raised from utter poverty to a sudden state of comparative affluence, Petrot launched into his former manner of living, the result of which was that in three years he had to fly the kingdom. In 1805 he was dwelling at Calais, 'without even a coat to cover him—a sad reverse to a man who had once possessed a superb equipage, with three servants behind, in the richest liveries, and a running footman preceding him.'

Viganoni and Signora Allegranti, two very eminent singers, were engaged in 1781. Ansani and his wife were also engaged. He was a fine singer, and she had once been a charming performer. They did not carry love of harmony into the domestic circle, for they were perpetually quarrelling; and when they had been in Italy, if one sang, the other would send persons into the theatre to hiss.

The shape of the theatre was altered in 1782, by Novosielski. In May, 1783, the establishment closed, hampered with debts. The creditors of Mr. Taylor met, and the whole property was put up for sale, under the authority of the sheriffs. The performers being unpaid, some concerts and special performances at the Pantheon were given for their benefit. In June, Gallini and Harris took possession, under the sheriff, for 28,000*l.* In September, Crawford was appointed manager and treasurer, under trustees. In December, Gallini advertised that he was sole proprietor and director; but the day following that on which this advertisement appeared, another was issued, announcing that he was simply mortgagee for 4,170*l.* In February, 1784, the trustees advertised that Crawford was appointed manager by the Court of King's Bench. There was no opera after Easter except a few benefits. This year Sacchini quitted England, his departure being hastened by a difference with Signor Rauzzini, who

from a fast friend had become an implacable foe, declaring himself the composer of the principal songs in all the later operas to which Sacchini had appended his name, and threatening to make affidavit of it before a magistrate. Pacchierotti and Giardini also left England this year. Pacchierotti was succeeded by Crescentini, a very bad singer, who was in turn displaced by Tenducci. In the autumn of 1785 a receiver was appointed by the Court of Chancery, and immediately after, the demand which Gallini made upon the theatre was settled by the same Court, and paid off by trustees. In December the house opened for the season, Gallini being sole proprietor and director; but the following August there was an advertisement from the Lord Chamberlain's Office, that the opera having been improperly conducted, his lordship refuses to put it into other hands, and intends to have it under his own control. Operas were given at the Haymarket Theatre, the profits being appropriated to discharge the debts of the Opera House; and when the disputes were finally arranged, Gallini was 'invested with the power of ruining himself.' The Lord Chamberlain declined to grant a licence until he was satisfied that everybody engaged at the theatre would be paid, consequently it was with the utmost difficulty that arrangements could be made for opening the theatre; but at last everything was settled, and in 1786, the opera was recommenced. Cramer then led the band.

Gallini, formerly dancing-master at the opera, had amassed an enormous fortune (fully a hundred thousand pounds). He was a miser, and his covetousness was known to every one who had ever heard his name. One day he surprised all his acquaintance by inviting Petrot, the famous dancer, to dinner. The elder Angelo, who had for a number of years entertained Gallini at his table, but had never received even a glass of water in return, was asked, with his son and one or two others. Petrot had never seen Gallini's rooms, and after dinner, about nine o'clock, Gallini took his friends through the apartments, leading the

way with a wretched rushlight, 'so that we were almost in the dark,' says Henry Angelo. While Gallini was describing the ball-room, and telling how many it held, the great expense it had put him to, &c., a servant came to say that some one wanted to see him. Gallini left the party, giving to them his bit of candle, when Henry Angelo mischievously proposed that they should ignite the tapers in the chandelier, handing a slip of folded paper to each person. The room was in a blaze of light almost on the instant, the cotton having been moistened with spirits of wine. On his return, the host was frantic; crying, 'Cosi far? diavolo!' he rushed about like a madman, puffing out the lights. The whole party burst into a violent fit of laughter, and left him to mourn at his leisure. 'I have been told,' says Angelo, 'that when he attended his scholars, he used to promise his coachman a pint of beer if he got through the turnpikes without paying, but he always took care to have the first draught, and seldom left more than the froth at the bottom. Often when returning home at night, exhausted and fatigued, after a whole day's teaching in the country, he would take nothing but bread and cheese for his dinner, which he used to eat in his carriage. One night, finding nothing in the pantry, rather than be at the expense of sending for something for his supper, he had recourse to the cat's meat which he found in a corner, and with dripping, parsley, and onions, fried together, which he cooked himself, he feasted on this *grand plat*. At this very time, too, he was reckoned to be worth a hundred thousand pounds.' He married Lady Elizabeth, the sister of Lord Abingdon. Lord Abingdon was a very distinguished musical amateur. Gallini's management of the King's Theatre caused great derision from his parsimony. Mrs. Yates was the only one who had ever conducted the establishment on so rigidly economic a principle.

Madame Mara had arrived in England in the spring of 1784. At first she had sung only at concerts, but having appeared on the stage

by accident—or rather to perform an act of courtesy—she was persuaded to accept an engagement at the King's Theatre. One of the great difficulties experienced by Gallini was in forming a company, no singers having come from Italy. There was no leading male performer, so the second singer, Babbini, was promoted to the first parts. Madame Mara selected a number of airs from the works of different composers, for the pasticcio of 'Didone Abandonata,' which had an extraor-

dinary success. During the run of this piece Rubinelli arrived in London, after a most disastrous journey. He was one of the finest singers of the time; he had a grand dramatic style, and was a tall, handsome, majestic man, with a mild benign aspect. He was greatly admired. Cherubini was the nominal composer, but there were no singers worthy of performing his operas.

Gallini was still manager in 1787. In the spring, great curiosity was excited by the arrival of two new



LUIGI MARCHESI.

comic singers, Morelli and Signora Storace, from Vienna. The signora was an Englishwoman by birth, and in right of her mother, but her father was a Neapolitan, who had played for many years in the orchestra of the Opera-house when the band was conducted by Giardini. She had studied at Naples, and gained a good reputation in Vienna, where she had the honour of performing in some of Mozart's operas on their production. When she appeared at the King's Theatre with Morelli, her success was so marked that she decided on settling in England. She was an excellent singer in comic opera, and a lively, intelligent actress, though her figure and face were really ugly. But she was unable to perform in

serious opera: she could laugh, scold, cry, or quarrel; she could not supplicate or sing tender airs, and she had no dignity. Morelli was an admirable bass singer.

Madame Mara and Rubinelli left England on the termination of their several engagements, and the opera was carried through almost entirely with comic pieces, supported by Signora Storace and Benucci. A new ballet was produced, composed by Noverre, entitled 'Cupid and Psyche,' which threw the audience into such ecstasies of delight, that Noverre was unanimously called for, and was led on by Vestris and Mdlle. Hilligsberg, who had performed the characters of Cupid and Psyche: he was then crowned with laurel on the stage by

all the dancers. This was an innovation here, though a common testimony of admiration in France.

Luigi Marchesi was invited to London by Gallini in 1788. He was one of the most celebrated singers of the time, and had an exquisite voice and an elegant figure and pleasing countenance. Pacchierotti, Rubinelli, and Marchesi were the three most eminent performers in Europe. Pacchierotti was natural and touching, and had a prolific fancy; Rubinelli was majestic, and had a severe taste; Marchesi was elegant, grand in recitative, and unbounded in fancy and embellishments.

The next season the comic performers were dismissed on account of the expense, and replaced by singers and dancers so bad that nightly hisses evidenced the displeasure of the frequenters of the Opera. Gallini was at last obliged to send to Paris for better dancers, and engaged, among others, the famous ballerina, Mdle. Guimard. This danseuse was then nearly sixty, but she looked a mere girl when on the stage. She had adopted a strange device for enabling her to simulate the appearance of youth; she possessed a portrait of herself, painted when she was very young, and every morning she used to make herself up with rouge and cosmetics to resemble as nearly as possible this picture.

This season ended disastrously, for a short time before its close, in June, 1789, the Opera-house was entirely burnt down. Gallini offered a reward of three hundred pounds to any one who should discover the persons who were supposed to have set fire to the theatre. The damages were computed at 70,000*l*. The King interfered to negative the plan of rebuilding the Opera-house in another part of the metropolis. A few representations were given at Covent Garden, after the dramatic season was concluded; early in June, a 'great dismay arose lest there could be no opera at all next winter.' Arrangements were, however, made for carrying it on, upon a more limited scale at the little theatre in the Haymarket, which was temporarily fitted up, and Madame Mara

returned to resume her station at the head of the company. Marchesi was leading male singer. The Pantheon was opened in 1790, under the management of Mr. O'Reilly, with excellent concerts, for which Pacchierotti had returned to England. Pacchierotti and Marchesi sang together only once, when their hearers were so pleased, that they found it impossible to decide which was more worthy of *precedence*. Marchesi, however, despising these petty distinctions, yielded voluntarily to his senior, Pacchierotti, singing so as leave him the last air. This was Marchesi's last season in London. When he was about to depart for the Continent, he was arrested by his landlord for the amount of his board during the season—no inconsiderable sum, as the signor's appetite was as fine as his voice. Part of his agreement with Gallini had been that his board should be defrayed for the season; but the manager demurred at the last moment, and it was not until an arbitration of friends had been called that the matter was arranged, and the signor allowed to depart.

The opera was very successfully carried on at the Pantheon, with two good companies and ballets, under the management of O'Reilly. Of this gentleman's history nothing is known.

The celebrated Madame Banti was engaged as prima donna at the Pantheon, where she had already appeared in two different seasons. Her history had been a curious one. Some dozen years before this period, a little girl might have been met wandering through the piazzas of Venice, singing for such small coins as the good-nature of loiterers and chance passers-by should throw in her way. In appearance she was not much different from most ragged, careless little Italian beggar-girls, but the sweetness of her voice, and the untutored brilliancy of her execution were marvellous. This child, Brigida Giorgi, was the daughter of one of those gondoliers so famous in song and in story. She was idle, obstinate, and unmanageable, addicted to lounging about, doing nothing, yet picking up a livelihood in

a desultory fashion. Like most southern natures, her wants were few and easily satisfied—a handful of scudi, a sunny day, and the dear delights of the *dolce far niente* sufficed to make her happy. One day, as she sang, a Venetian nobleman was passing. Attracted by the tones of her bird-like voice, he paused to listen. Interested by her aspect, and thinking it were a pity for such a gift as she possessed to be wasted for lack of culture, he instituted some inquiries into her circumstances, and eventually placed her with an instructor. Brigida was not much more grateful for his benevolence than a bullfinch might be to anybody who should shut him up in a cage and teach him to pipe. Soon tiring of the drudgery of learning lessons, she set off to seek her fortune in Paris. She made her way first to Lyons, supporting herself on the journey by singing at cafés and various houses of refreshment, and at last reached Paris. One evening, in 1778, M. de Vismes, manager of the Opera, happening to pass a coffee-house on the boulevards, was struck by the tones of a beautiful female voice. He paused to listen, as the ‘Venetian nobleman’ had lingered in the piazza. He went in, and found an Italian girl singing to the company. Astonished by the sweetness and power of her voice, he inquired her name, and being informed of her somewhat romantic history, he slipped a louis into her hand, and invited her to call upon him the next day. She did so, and by her efforts surpassed his anticipations. After hearing him go through one of the most difficult of Sacchini’s airs, she sang it not only without a single error, but with unusual taste and expression. He immediately took her under his charge, and having taught her as much as her indolent and volatile disposition would admit of her acquiring, he engaged her for the opera buffa at his theatre: she appeared, and the public ratified his favourable judgment. She was then offered an engagement at the London Opera, at a salary of 800*l.* a year, for three seasons, encumbered, however, with a stipulation that 100*l.* a year should be deducted from that

sum for payment of an able vocal instructor, to complete her training.

The curiosity of the musical world was strongly excited by her sudden fame. Giardini, as an eminent musical authority, was asked, previous to her arrival, his opinion of her talent. ‘She is the first singer in Italy, and drinks a bottle of wine every day,’ was his reply. She was placed with Sacchini for the purpose of being instructed in music; but that master found her so intolerably idle and self-willed that he very soon gave her up in despair. She was then committed to Signor Piozzi (afterwards the husband of Mrs. Thrale), whose patience was likewise speedily exhausted. Her last master in England was Abel; but she was incapable of profiting by his tuition. However, her want of application was happily atoned for by her genius and natural gifts. She was an exquisite singer, and, as an actress, she surpassed in grace, dignity, and feeling all the stage singers who had preceded her. She was then twenty-one; her figure was good, her countenance expressive, though not handsome, and she had a charming head. Her husband was Banti, the dancer.

During the recess arrangements were made for opening the Haymarket in the winter. There was no time to bring over any new company, so the manager collected the best singers then in England, with Madame Mara as their chief.

The newspapers of 1790 contain plausible statements descriptive of an intended Opera-house, to be erected by O’Reilly, who had obtained an interest, it was considered, by purchasing the claim of the family of Vanbrugh. This Opera-house was to be built near Leicester Fields, the site of the Prince of Wales’s palace. O’Reilly advertised that he had obtained a patent for a new opera in Leicester Square, and that no other patent was in existence. He did obtain the Lord Chamberlain’s licence, and in October he announced the speedy opening of the Pantheon as an Opera-house. In the mean time, by the exertions of Mr. Taylor, in 1790 the foundation of the new theatre was laid by the Earl of Buckinghamshire.

ADVENTURES OF A LADY IN SEARCH OF A HORSE.

CHAPTER II.

HOW THE HORSE TURNED OUT WHOSE 'STRENGTH LAY IN HIS HEAD.'

IN the course of a day or two everything was prepared for the event of Gloriana's first ride; and Brutus in a bran new saddle and bridle, and Gloriana in a bran new habit and hat, formed the nucleus of an admiring crowd of small urchins, who were attracted on the way from school by the novel sight of Miss Applegarde mounted on her new purchase, which seemed likely to afford her some little trouble in the process of 'making' which she had looked forward to with such laudable zeal. Indeed, he appeared, as far as their juvenile faculties were capable of discriminating, to have a very strong will of his own, in furtherance of which he brought his ponderous head to bear, in all its boasted strength, upon the young lady's weak and inexperienced hands.

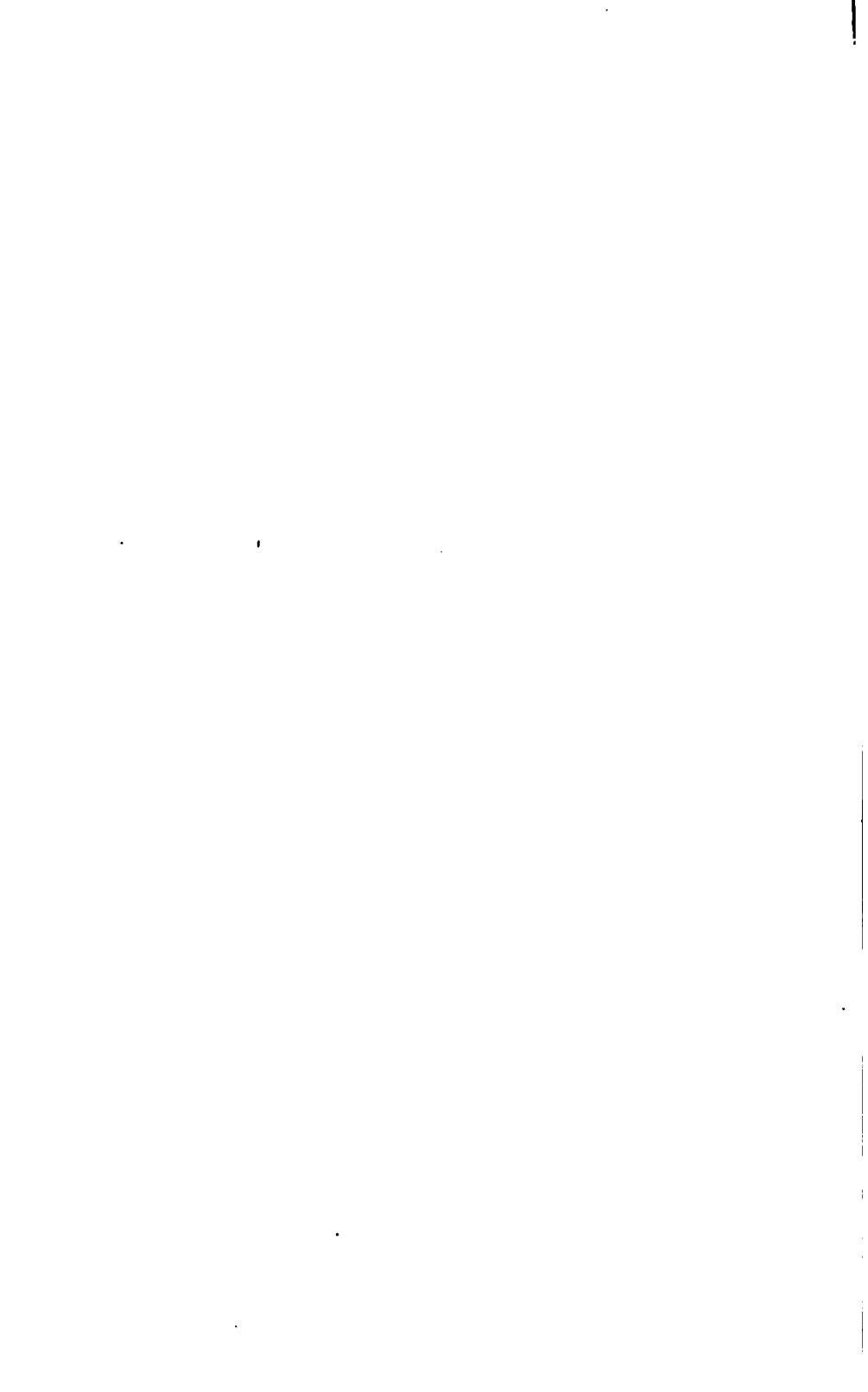
'I shall be tired to death,' she said to herself when the tussle was at last over, and the cob's head turned, sorely against his will, in the direction of the common, which extended for nearly a mile, and a view of which was commanded from the drawing-room windows of the cottage.

She was, indeed, almost tired to death as it was, for she was far from strong; but the worst was still to come. She had not hitherto attempted to urge the animal out of a walking pace, and was recruiting her strength for the operation of 'putting him through his paces,' which she hoped to do with immense *éclat* before the admiring eyes of her mother and sister, of Mr. Wells, and the boy, and of the boy's father, 'who understood all about horses,' and whose services Mr. Wells had, indeed, finally secured, in order that the cob might do credit to the establishment, and not by his bad condition or slovenly appointments lead to the installation of that hateful functionary, a regular *bonâ-fide* groom.

'You must canter first, you know,' said Gloriana, condescendingly, to the brown cob Brutus, who was so devoid of birth and breeding as to reply to this conciliatory address on the part of his mistress, which was accompanied by a corresponding action of hand and foot, by a resolute shake of his uncouth head, and by a decided downward inclination of that appendage in the direction of his fore feet. 'My goodness! I do believe he's going to kick,' said Gloriana; and the observation in this instance was not directed to the horse, but wrung from her in the agony of apprehension which the certain conviction brought to her mind. But Brutus rested satisfied with indulging his playful mood by a caper or two, which, although comparatively innocent in the eyes of lookers-on, shook Gloriana in her saddle to an alarming extent, for the movements of the cob were rough and quick, and there was no manner of spring in the well-developed joints and muscles, which had excited such admiration in the breast of Mr. Wells. Once set in motion, Brutus vouchsafed to proceed to the far end of the common in a tolerably steady canter; every now and then, however, breaking into a heavy and dislocating trot, which threw Gloriana's light figure high into the air, and caught it again at the rebound, with a strength and jerkiness which had an exhausting rather than an exhilarating effect on the nerves and muscles of his rider. Gloriana was not at all devoid of the English quality—pluck; and once embarked in an enterprise, it was not in her nature to give in. 'I have no doubt that it will do me good—in time,' she said, spasmodically, between the jerks, when weak physical human nature was pleading rather hard to be let off the severe ordeal of being pounded to death on the back of a regular bone-crusher, and suggest-



'BLACK BESS.'—(Page 130.)



ing the abandonment of the whole plan in despair. And it was doing her good, inasmuch as it was employing the faculties both of body and mind—rousing her to exertion, and dispelling the morbid fancies which had been taking such hold of her young imagination. The elephantine gambols of Brutus had accomplished this, if they had done nothing more; but his paces and action had proved so rough and tiring, that as Gloriana dismounted from his back by means of a chair, which the ever-watchful Wells had brought for her accommodation, she turned suddenly pale, and then reeled and fell from the chair into his arms in a dead, heavy swoon.

'Take the brute away, can't you?' the butler said, with much irritation, to the man of understanding with regard to the noble animal; 'take him away to the stable. If this is to be the consequence of exercise upon four legs, I think two's a better number; and I don't put so much faith in Sir Erasmus as I did. Don't be alarmed, ma'am,' he continued, as he bore his insensible burden into the drawing-room, and deposited it upon a sofa; 'it's only the haction of that ere Brutus that has been too much for Miss Gloriana; and she so weak, poor thing! I doubt whether she'll be able to stand it now.'

Poor Mrs. Applegarde looked as pale as Gloriana, but Kate, whose presence of mind never forsook her, began immediately to busy herself about the prostrate form of her sister—chafing her hands and feet, bathing her white face and brows with eau de Cologne, and applying smelling-salts to her nostrils.

'She's a-coming to now,' said Wells, as the first tender flush of colour in her cheeks bespoke the return of suspended animation; and the poor mother, who was trembling in her helpless anxiety, stooped to kiss her forehead, saying, in a flutter of lachrymose agitation—

'It's all that nasty horse, I know. Sir Erasmus made a great mistake, and forgot how weak the poor child was——. But never mind, my dear, you shall not attempt to ride again; and it will, indeed, be quite a relief

to my mind. I said all along there was something wicked about its eyes and the way in which it put its ears back when you approached it; and after it jumped about with you in that dreadful way on the common, I could not bear to look out again. Kate told me that you had come through the front gate all right, and the next thing I beheld was Wells carrying you in in a fainting state——. But never mind, my dear, you shall not ride again; and we'll get rid of that dreadful horse as soon as possible.'

'Indeed, mamma,' said Gloriana, raising herself on her elbow on the sofa-cushion, 'it is not at all a dreadful horse, and I enjoyed my ride immensely; I hope to ride again to-morrow and every day; and I do not intend to disgrace myself in this way again. After all, there was nothing wonderful in my fainting, for I have heard *men* say'—and here she blushed slightly, for the sayings and doings of men had been hitherto little canvassed amongst the gentle tenants of Park Side Cottage—'I have heard men say that they are often regularly knocked up with the first day's hunting; and of course a first ride is the same thing to me. I am all right now,' she added; but it must be confessed that her looks did not quite bear out the assertion; and she was obliged before very long to own to a more than usual feeling of fatigue and exhaustion, and to retire unwillingly to bed. But the spell, it would appear, was already working, for she did all she could to arouse herself, and fought against the languor which before this memorable ride she had perhaps in some measure fostered and encouraged.

In the course of the evening Mr. Wells was summoned to an interview with the man of understanding with regard to the stable economy of the brown cob Brutus, which ended, I am sorry to say, in his becoming a second time a dupe, through the medium of the unerring shaft of flattery, directed with faultless aim to the vulnerable point in his manly breast. That the quadruped in question was likely to con-

sume a certain amount of hay and corn, and that he 'lay upon straw,' was the extent of his information upon the subject under discussion, and he was, therefore, as might be supposed, helpless as a child in the hands of a man who possessed a large share of the quality of 'cuteness,' generally supposed to appertain to intellects sharpened on the grindstone of a knowledge of horse-flesh. The spoils of the unconscious cob had, indeed, formed the corner-stone of a very pretty castle in the air, which had been run up, regardless of expense, in the fertile brain of the worthy known to the village by the suggestive cognomen of 'Knowing Ned,' and he blessed the happy fate that had cast into his net such an unmitigated 'flat' as the worthy butler, who became in his hands an easy, although unconscious, tool.

'I'll do justice to that oss, Mr. Wells,' he began, 'purvided you see me through it in the matter of wages. I understands all about osses, and did from a boy; but if I undertakes groom's work, I must have groom's pay—barring the livery, which I don't ask for, seeing I can't ride since I threw out a splint in my near leg, which you knows, Mr. Wells, as well as I can tell you, and that I speak the truth. There's my old 'ooman, as attends church reglar, and always did from a child, would tell you the same any day on her Bible oath.'

'We don't want no grooms in livery here,' replied the butler with so much eagerness that, by an over-liberality in the matter of negatives, he destroyed the force of his own remark. 'But the horse must be attended to; and I'll speak to my mistress on the subject. Have a glass of ale, my good man, and look to the cob till further orders, will you?'

And it was in this manner that the man of understanding with regard to horses, the father of the boy who did the odds and ends of work at Park Side Cottage, who went by the name of 'Knowing Ned' in the village, inserted the thin end of the wedge of his own fortunes into the tempting aperture

which the false diplomacy of Mr. Wells with regard to an *irregular* groom offered to his acute perceptions.

'I sees my way to fifty pounds, if I sees it to a shillin,' he said to himself, as he swallowed a refreshing draught of his patron's home-brewed ale. 'The first thing I'll do will be to swop the brown cob for the old mare Blind Bess. If Miss Applegarde rides him to-morrow she won't the day after—unless I am very much mistaken, leastways.'

What diabolical plot was hatching under the skull of knavish contour appertaining to 'Knowing Ned,' to perpetrate on the morrow with regard to his young mistress and the brown cob Brutus, we will leave the next chapter of these Adventures to reveal, only hinting that it was one which appeared to afford him unwonted satisfaction, for he chuckled to himself a low, cunning chuckle as he littered down Brutus for the night, observing to that stolid quadruped during the operation, 'You are a nice oss, you are; but you ain't fit for a lady noways.'

CHAPTER III.

STABLE SECRETS—SHOWING HOW THE BROWN COB BRUTUS BECAME THE PROPERTY OF 'KNOWING NED,' AND THE BLIND MARE THE PROPERTY OF MISS APPLERGARDE.

Gloriana escaped the designs of that villanous individual 'Knowing Ned,' whatever they might have been, for a whole week. She was, indeed, regularly knocked up; and, notwithstanding her courage and determination, she was unable to conceal the fact from the watchful eyes of her mother and sister, and was, consequently, absolutely forbidden to ride again until she had recovered her usual amount of strength, or rather the same amount of it that she possessed when she had consulted the London doctor. On the eighth day from the date of her first ride, Knowing Ned becoming anxious, like all plotters, to put his design into execution, made a point of meeting Mr. Wells as he took his

short daily walk to the village post-office; and pulling his forelock with the same amount of respect he would have shown to a master had he possessed one, he thus addressed him:—

'The cob's very fresh, Mr. Wells; he'll be too much for the young lady if she don't keep him in exercise; he's got a temper, too, of his own; and them low-bred 'uns is apt to get tricky.'

'Good gracious! what is to be done, then?' was the butler's reply. 'It's a take in, if the cob ain't quiet; because we advertised for a quiet one, "to carry a lady."'

'He ain't quiet now—leastways he's very free with his heels in the stable; and I don't see no chance of his getting quiet standing eating his head off in the stable, and nothing taken out of him noways.'

With these ominous words, which filled his hearer with apprehension, and causing him to give utterance to those peculiar signs of lamentation made with the tongue and palate of the mouth, Knowing Ned turned away, and hobbled slowly in the direction of the stable. A few minutes afterwards he was followed, as he had foreseen, by Mr. Wells, who was anxious to ascertain the state of the brown cob's temper with his own eyes, and who, before he got to the door, became aware, through the medium of another organ, that an active encounter or trial of strength was going on between him and his personal attendant, while in tones of remonstrance the latter addressed his charge:—'You would, would you!—Quiet, you varmint, will you!—Come up!—Stand still!—Go over!' while, as Mr. Wells cautiously peered round the stable-door, two iron-shod heels flashed within a yard of his face, causing him to retire with precipitation, heedless of the invitation addressed to him by Ned to come in and see what a 'wicious brute' he had to deal with; or to lay his hand upon his quarters, and just see 'if he didn't let out.' Unwilling to put the irascible temperament of the cob to any personal test, he heartily concurred with the remark that 'he was not fit for a

lady noways;' and as he hastened the preparations for tea, which, in an establishment so entirely feminine, was, as I need scarcely observe, the meal of the day, he resolved upon disburdening his mind on the subject of the brown cob's disqualifications during the progress of that social repast.

Gloriana herself paved the way for the observations he intended to make by saying, 'I shall be able to ride again to-morrow: the stiffness is quite gone off; and Brutus will be getting too much for me if he has neither exercise nor work.'

'I am very much afraid that he won't suit, after all,' Miss Gloriana, said Wells, pompously. 'I am afraid he is full of vice: he nearly killed Ned and me in the stable to-day.'

'Oh, horses are often very vicious in the stable that are very quiet out!' was the reply. 'There is War Eagle, up at the Park, who is as quiet as a lamb when he's mounted. And there's only one of the helpers that he will let dress him over; and he nearly killed him once.'

'Dear me!' said Mrs. Applegarde; 'how dreadful! And how did you hear that, my dear?' she added, while, luckily for Gloriana's sake, whose colour, ever rosy, had become deep crimson at the question, she wandered on in a way that was habitual with her. 'But it really is such an undertaking having anything to do with horses with no gentleman to consult, and so much roguery and deception going on. I do so much regret that your poor dear uncle, who always had such fine horses, and so beautifully kept, should have died just when he did—not, of course, on that account only, but such a loss as he was to his family. Like your poor dear papa, my dears, excepting that he was never such a domestic man, and not so tall or good-looking, either—not such an *Applegarde*, in fact,' said the widow, drawing herself up, and glorying in the name of the husband whom she had idolized, and to whom, in the freshness of her remarkable beauty, she had also been all in all. Perhaps, had

he lived, the great simplicity of her character, which was an additional charm in early youth—. But why should I suggest any doubt as to his constancy under a contingency not fated to occur? Why should we despise simplicity even in mature age, when it is the sign of the innocence of a nature that contact with the world can neither sully nor efface? Let simplicity grow old if it can. If it sometimes weary us, it must command, nevertheless, our love and our respect. There are depths and heights both of evil and of good which must be hid from such natures evermore. But while the strong currents wrestle in the deeps, and the storm clouds gather on the mountain tops, let the sunbeams play gently on the shallows of life: all are beautiful: it is we who are blind in only allowing beauty in what we can appreciate and understand. Mrs. Applegarde's nature was a very simple but a very loveable one; and I was wrong in hinting that had her husband lived he would have found it less attractive than in the fresh spring time of early youth. I am sure, upon reflection, that I was quite wrong.

'I shall try Brutus again to-morrow, at all events,' said Gloriana, taking up the thread of the subject which she and Mr. Wells had had under discussion when her mother had ambled off on her favourite palfrey of somewhat disconnected reminiscences; 'it will not be easy to get rid of him if he does not suit.'

'I am afraid not, miss,' was the reply; 'but there's no knowing; and things do turn up sometimes unawares—a maxim in the philosophy of human affairs, which none of Mr. Wells's audience felt inclined either to gainsay or refute; indeed, as he disappeared with short, quick steps under the weight of the tea-urn and his own increasing flesh, Mrs. Applegarde remarked, enthusiastically, 'I really don't know what would become of us without James,' so entirely had he impressed his mistress with the idea that he was a necessary unit in the scheme of her existence—the unit, in fact, which gave importance and meaning

to the three cyphers which, in all matters of business (or horseflesh), she considered herself and her daughters to be.

As Knowing Ned the next day saddled Brutus for Miss Applegarde to ride, there was a latent sparkle of triumph to be observed in the corner of his *most* knowing eye, which did not diminish as the cob made his exit from the stable with a playful flourish of his heels, and with a snort which betrayed to the experienced in such things that he was 'full of fettle and play.'

'Ware heels!' cried Ned, in tones of caution to Mr. Wells, who was ambling slowly and cautiously round the palfrey, with a view of ascertaining that he was 'all right' before his young mistress mounted; and before the words were well out of his mouth, Brutus indulged in a kick which had for its object the person of the valued domestic, to whom he appeared, indeed, to have conceived a great personal aversion.

'Ow on earth is Miss Gloriana to get up, I should like to know, with the brute lashing out in that way,' said the butler, with great asperity; and surveying the clumsy form of the 'ansomest cob in England' with but little trace of his former admiration and approval.

'She ain't afraid, I knows,' was the answer intended for Gloriana's ears, who appeared at that moment ready equipped, and followed by Mrs. Applegarde and Kate, who shared the fears of Mr. Wells with regard to the cob, and who were both nervously anxious as to the result of the ride.

'I must have a chair, I believe,' said Gloriana, who blushed a little at the idea of the implied inexperience both of the mounter and the mountee; but the chair having been placed, after some little display of resistance on his part, by the side of the horse, she displayed great quickness and nimbleness in mounting thence to his broad back.

No sooner was she in the saddle, and the reins gathered 'nohow,' as Ned afterwards observed, in her hand, than Brutus, left to his own devices, kicked over the chair which had been a source of annoyance to

him; and finding that in so doing he had hurt his own heels, he kicked again spitefully more than once, so that Gloriana with difficulty kept her seat, and was fain to cling for life or death to the pommel of her saddle, which, being an old-fashioned one supplied from the stock of the village saddler, possessed that appendage in a more developed state than is necessary now in the improved state of things with regard to modern side-saddles, the tall, awkward crutch on the off side being now entirely done away with, and the balance preserved by what is, in fact, only a second pommel placed in a different position.

'He'll be all right presently, Miss,' said Knowing Ned, who in his own mind had planned that Gloriana should have enough of the cob's antics that day to sicken her of him at once and for ever. 'Just give him his head, and take it out of him a bit, right down the common. He'll be quiet enough after a bit.'

Fallacious hope! No sooner did Brutus find under his hoofs the short elastic turf of Ambledown Common, than, mad from the effects of his long holiday and four feeds of corn daily (with which Ned had supplied him, for purposes best known to himself), he commenced a series of plunges and jumps which were terrible to look at, and still worse to experience.

'What a beast you are!' said poor Gloriana, shaken to death, and really hurt with the violence of the cob's movements. 'I can never do anything with you, I am quite sure, so it's no use attempting it;' and turning his head towards home, she intended to take him back, and give up all attempts to ride him for the future. But, alas! even that little space she was not destined to traverse in safety, for the overfed and underbred cob finding his head turned towards the stable which had proved such a Paradise to his sensual nature, gave a final bound and twist, which succeeded in dislodging Gloriana from the saddle; and as she lay prostrate on the turf, which was luckily soft with recent rain, he galloped home, snorting and riderless, to frighten the inmates of the cottage

almost to death on the spot. Gloriana herself was the least frightened of all, excepting, perhaps, the wicked author of the mischief, Knowing Ned, who had fed up Brutus in the hope of the present result, and who, having his wits more about him than any of the rest of the party, and notwithstanding the splint in his off leg, ran down the coach-road and out upon the common with the speed of an agile demon to offer his hypocritical condolences to the victim of his own craftiness.

'You ain't hurt, miss, I 'ope,' he said, as Gloriana picked herself up, and proceeded to walk with rather unsteady, trembling steps towards home. 'I told Mr. Wells what a vicious varmint he was afore ever you got on his back.'

'No, I am not hurt in the least,' was the reply; 'but I can see that the cob will never do for me. I am tired to death before I have been on his back five minutes.'

'In course you be, miss. He ain't got no spring about him, he ain't; and he's a reg'lar low-bred 'un into the bargain. There's nothink like blood for a lady. I was a-thinking this morning, miss, afore you went out, of a black mare that would suit you to a T.'

'We have got to get rid of the cob before we think of getting another,' said Gloriana, rather shortly, for she felt that the horsey man was rather too loquacious to be altogether agreeable; and she hastened on to assure her anxious mother that there were no bones broken, and that she was none the worse for the fall, with the exception of the shake. 'But one thing I am certain of, mamma,' she added, with a sigh, 'and that is, that *Brutus will never do!* he is too rough and too full of tricks. And I am only very sorry that I persuaded you to buy him.'

'Don't think about money, my child, where your precious health is concerned: there must be suitable horses to be had for money; and if your poor dear uncle had only lived, he would have given us the best advice of any one that I ever knew. We must get rid of this one, there is no doubt—nasty thing;

—if we only get ten pounds for him.'

The plot which Knowing Ned had hatched in his artful brain would, he foresaw, through the innocence of his victims be very easily carried into execution. His brother, a vagabond horse coper, who wandered about the country from one fair to another, had upon his hands at that moment a black thoroughbred mare—aged, blind of one eye, and, as Ned would himself have

described it, 'screwed all over,' which he had purchased at the high figure of three pound ten, in the hope that he might be lucky enough to find some one willing to buy her for five.

That very afternoon a despatch was forwarded by a sure hand from the stable-room at Park Side, which, for brevity of expression and condensation of matter, might have formed a model to be studied with advantage by members of circumlo-



'BRUTUS WILL NEVER DO!'—(Page 127.)

cution offices, who manage to cover reams of paper without conveying a quarter of the meaning contained in the terribly dirty document, which ran as follows:—

'Send the black mare bak by barer—I've got some flat uns.—From bruther Ned.'

It is scarcely necessary to add, after this, that the black mare duly arrived, or that she proved a good card in the hands of the vagabond horse coper and his knowing brother.

She was a sweet-tempered, gentle beast, showing a great deal of blood: she had, indeed, in her palmy days, been a promising racing mare, but had broken down suddenly and irrevocably in the zenith of her fame, and had since been knocked about the world, being preserved only from utter ruin by various good qualities, which made her a pleasant hack. All her remaining advantages were now, however, sadly upon the wane. Her regular up and down lady's

canter was becoming daily more wooden and unsafe. Her eyes were going: one, indeed, was quite gone; and she was, in fact, a mere wreck, hardly worth the three pound ten that had been given for her on speculation by her latest purchaser. She was in very fair condition, never having had the misfortune to fall into bad hands, in the merciless sense of the words; and as she was led round and round the carriage ring, for the inspection and approval of the ladies, they all exclaimed, simultaneously, 'What a pretty creature!' while the romance attending the name of 'Black Bess,' her high bred and gentle manners, and the way she had of insinuating her velvet muzzle into their caressing hands, decided the feminine council at once upon the expediency of the *swoop*, which Knowing Ned had so artfully proposed. He was not likely to lose much by the transaction, for Brutus, the cob, was a valuable animal in his own line. Six years old, sound, strong as a camel, and with a camel's powers of endurance, he was quite worth the forty guineas which Mrs. Applegarde had paid for him, although not worth forty shillings to her; for had he been ever so quiet, his action in itself would have prevented any one so delicate in health as her daughter then was, from enjoying the exercise of riding him; and tricky and restive into the bargain, it was quite out of the question that she would be able to profit by his services. Notwithstanding the fall, however, and notwithstanding the shake, wonderful to relate, she was decidedly better. She had roused herself from the lethargy and languor into which she had been fast sinking, and the difficulties attending the attainment of the prescribed exercise excited, amused, and interested her. Truly Sir Erasmus Globule deserved credit for the discernment which had foreseen such happy results.

Perceiving that his design was succeeding, even beyond his expectations, Knowing Ned was seized with a brilliant idea, and on the spur of the moment, and with unblushing effrontery, he said, 'For

twenty guineas and the brown cob, my brother would part with the mare; there's not a sweeter 'ack in all the country than she is on road or turf.'

'What do you think, Wells?' said Mrs. Applegarde, appealing to the family oracle, who, since his signal failure with regard to the cob, had been rather silent when the subject of a fresh purchase had come under discussion.'

'I think Miss Gloriana had better try this one, in the first instance,' he said, deliberately: 'one can't always judge of a horse by the outside.'

'I'll put the saddle on her at once, Miss,' said Ned, suggestively; 'she'll carry you like a lamb, and you'll see that there's no deception about her. She's no bone-crusher, she aint.'

So Gloriana, being easy of persuasion with regard to adventure, determined upon trying Black Bess at once; and having mounted by means of the chair, the mare cantered away with her quietly down the coach road, and then quietly on to the smooth turf, with easy action, up and down like a rocking-horse, and holding her light head in a graceful arch from her neck, a very different thing from the heavy pull which the cob had maintained upon the weak hands of his rider.

'Oh, this is delightful! and you are a dear creature,' was Gloriana's exclamation, as she rode up to the door, neither shaken nor exhausted, but with a healthy glow in her transparent cheek. 'I feel, mamma, that this sort of riding *will* do me good.'

'I wish I had said forty and the cob,' said Ned to himself, as he saw the gratified looks of the whole party, and witnessed the caresses lavished on Black Bess, while Wells himself was not afraid to approach within three arms' length of the gentle animal. The bargain was concluded there and then, according to the first proposal, and the valuable mare was installed in the vacant place of Brutus, who, as he took his departure, was little regretted by any of the party, least of all by his particular patron, Mr. Wells, who

had so strongly affected him in the first instance. Black Bess, on the contrary, became quite a pet with the whole establishment, and some weeks had elapsed before anything occurred to throw a light upon the real value of the animal, for whom four times her value in money had been given, and the cob actually given away.

As far, indeed, as Gloriana's health was concerned, she had proved a good investment. The gentle exercise, without fatigue, which her easy action and light mouth afforded, did such wonders, that in three weeks the country doctor pronounced that Miss Applegarde was in a fair way to the recovery both of her health and spirits. 'But,' he added, in a voice of warning, 'you must be very careful how you ride, for that mare is far from safe, and the common ground is very rough and uneven in some places; if she were to come down there, she would give you a bad fall.'

'Black Bess is as quiet as a lamb, doctor, I assure you,' put in Mrs. Applegarde. 'Gloriana tells me that it requires no exertion to manage her, and that is the great thing, after all, in her delicate state of health.'

'Quiet she is, ma'am, I grant you, but not safe, nevertheless; and a blind horse, with shaky fore legs, is scarcely a desirable mount for a young lady, who, with all the courage, has scarcely at present the best hand in the world,' remarked the blunt doctor; while Gloriana blushed crimson with indignation at the slur thus cast upon her riding, and exclaimed, simultaneously with her mother and sister:—

'A blind horse! You do not mean to say that Black Bess is blind, doctor?'

'One eye is going, and the other is already gone; and I believe,' he added, 'that the name of the animal has undergone a slight alteration lately, and that by changing three letters *blind* has become *black*, for your especial accommodation. I heard all about *Blind* Bess at Hill Top Farm, where she is as well known as the postman, who has ridden her backwards and forwards

on the turnpike road to Fairyard, every day for the last three years. She fell down with him so often, that he sent her to the fair, where she was sold for three pound ten. I won't say who to, for fear of making mischief, but I could not hear all this without giving you warning, and putting you more on your guard.'

'It must be really dangerous, my dear,' said Mrs. Applegarde, addressing her daughter; 'you know you have told me about her stumbling so much lately, and Ned put it down to her having been newly shod: but I do not like this account at all, and only trust that he knew nothing of the creature's antecedents when he brought her here.'

'I know nothing about that,' said the cautious doctor; 'but I hope and trust that Miss Applegarde will ride her carefully, if she continues to ride her at all.'

'I always do that,' she replied; 'and, indeed, you must not think of recommending me to give up riding, now that I am so fond of it, for if I do I shall certainly be ill again.'

'Give up riding on no account, but ride with as much regard for your neck as you can; and do not, above all things, trust to the perception of a blind mare when you gallop over rabbit commons with a loose rein.'

'What stuff he talks,' said Gloriana, peevishly, as he left the room; 'he goes gossiping about at farm-houses, and believes all the nonsense that they tell him. I am sure that Black Bess is perfectly safe myself.'

Now that her eyes had been opened, however, to the unwelcome fact, she could not help recalling to mind that the mare did very often stumble, especially on rough or uneven ground, and that she relied entirely on the hand which guided her, which being an inexperienced, and, on that account, an undecided one, often courted the danger which it wished to avoid. It was but a week after the doctor's warning that she fell as she was galloping, propelling her rider over her head with some force to the ground, and cutting her own knees cruelly on the

mound of gravel which had caused the accident. Poor Gloriana returned home somewhat crestfallen, but fortunately not much hurt. A family council was held the next day, in which it was decided that poor broken-kneed Bess should be turned out in the meadow belonging to the cottage, and kept merely as a pet; for her sweet temper and affectionate disposition had won for her the regard of all the inmates of Park Side Cottage, and they agreed that for the services she had rendered she was entitled to a pension, or turn out in clover, for the remainder of her natural life.

'She has done her part in bringing back your roses, my dear,' said Mrs. Applegarde; 'and she deserves my everlasting gratitude for that. And now there is a more difficult question to decide, and that is, What is to be done about getting another? And who,' added the widow, despairingly, 'who *are we* to trust?'

'I have been thinking it over,' replied Gloriana, musingly. 'I heard from Miss Levison the other day, and she wishes me to have the Welsh pony, "Taffy," until they return from abroad. Perhaps it will be the best plan after all; and, as I ride alone, it will be easier to get on and off, and to open and shut gates: don't you think so, Kate?'

'Would they not allow us to buy the pony?' suggested Mrs. Applegarde. 'I do not much like being under an obligation, even to the Levisons.'

'Perhaps they think the obligation would be the other way,' said Gloriana, proudly: 'they asked me, as a favour, to use the pony, and I have reason to know that they mean what they say.'

As Gloriana had mentioned only Miss Levison's name in the first instance, the substitution of the third person plural for that of the third person singular would have struck the ear of most mothers at once, for in that plural was included their very good-looking, manly, and agreeable young squire and landlord, Ralph Levison, who had taken it into his head suddenly to go abroad for six months, no one knew why or wherefore, just before Gloriana's ill-

ness had alarmed her friends. But Mrs. Applegarde had not that instinctive penetrative faculty which makes a secret an impossible thing to a mother's eye. She did not know, and she could not see, that the motive which induced Gloriana to accept the offer of the Welsh pony, made to her by Mr. Levison through his sister, had something more in it than appeared on the surface; and when her daughter did all that she could do under the circumstances, viz., hint it to her, she did not take the hint.

The reader must exercise his own discernment upon this matter. It is not likely that he should be more discriminating than a mother; nor am I bound to reveal any secrets, or take any hints, before the appointed time. All that it is necessary to say here is, that Taffy was located in the empty stall, and he became first favourite with Gloriana, who enjoyed upon his back what she began to call real rides. He was a handsome, strongly-built, spirited pony, full of courage, and entirely free from vice. Over the wild breezy commons, in the rough and stony lanes, he was equally clever and safe as a hack, and Gloriana, although self-taught, was learning, by daily experience, to ride well. The only thing remarkable about this pony was his extraordinary appetite. The stable bills which Mrs. Applegarde settled every quarter mounted up to fabulous sums; and when she remonstrated with Ned on the subject, the only remark that he vouchsafed in reply was:—

'Them Welsh ponies is hawful ones to feed; and Miss Applegarde won't have him stinted, anyhow.'

'Of course; no one wishes him to be stinted,' replied his easy mistress; 'and if he wants it, he must have it; but it seems to me quite extraordinary that a mere pony should eat so much.'

'It's no objeck to me,' said Knowing Ned, doggedly: 'we'll make him do upon less; but if he looks poor, I know who'll get the credit of it when the young squire comes home.'

And acting upon the dark threat which he had held out, he supplied poor Taffy with about half a feed of

corn a day, out of a supply sufficient to keep two hunters in high condition for the ensuing quarter; so that the pony's ribs began to show, even through the heavy coat with which nature had provided him.

'He looks worse and worse,' said Gloriana, as she brought him in early one day, grieved to the heart to see him falling off so when she wished him to be looking his best. 'Do you think that you give him corn enough?' she added, looking hard at Ned, who had not, it must be owned, enjoyed her perfect confidence since the suspicious affair of Black Bess.

'I gives him what the missus allows,' he replied, sancily enough: 'I can't do more by him nor that.'

Gloriana flew to her mother to inquire into the meaning of this mysterious imputation, and extracted from her that she had certainly recommended retrenchment in the matter of the stable economy, but that she had expressly stipulated that the pony should have enough.

'He *must* have enough, if I pay for it out of my own pocket,' was the hasty reply. 'I can never send him back to the park with his bones staring out of his skin, in the way they are doing now.'

And the next day she did in fact order two bags of corn from a friendly farmer, which she kept under lock and key, and from which, notwithstanding the black looks of the irregular groom, she administered three feeds daily to Taffy with her own fair hands.

'There will be no corn-bill for mamma this quarter,' she said severely to that worthy, who looked terribly sulky at being outwitted in the tactics which the easy credulity of his mistress had suggested to his fertile mind. He had his revenge, however, and the pony was the sufferer after all.

'He'll put on no flesh till he's clipped, miss,' he remarked to his young mistress, who was lamenting over Taffy's shaggy appearance; 'he was always clipped up at the park long afore this.'

'Was he?' Gloriana eagerly remarked. 'We must get him done

at once, then. I do not want them to see any difference in him when he goes back.'

Taffy was clipped and singed accordingly; and with the additional supply of corn, and the superabundant flow of spirits induced by the loss of his thick greatcoat, he became almost too much for Gloriana, and as frisky without any vice as a pony could well be. The nights were frosty and cold, and Taffy's coat was very short; so that a window left open—by accident, of course—one bitter night, did the work that was to prove Knowing Ned's revenge for the interference of Gloriana in the matter of the stable economy. Taffy coughed twice the following morning; and the next day he coughed continuously; and the day after that Miss Applegarde heard the unwelcome news that the pony had inflammation in him, and that it was a chance if his life could be saved. A messenger was sent at once into Greyminster, on the blind mare, to summon the veterinary surgeon that the town afforded. He came with all speed, but only in time to find that the pony was beyond his aid: the sudden change from starvation to good feeding, and the exposure to the chilling night air in his newly-clipped state, had done its work. Taffy was indeed dying; and if the poor pony had been a Christian, as the saying is, the announcement could hardly have been attended with more genuine sorrow in the hearts of all concerned; while Gloriana herself was the victim of the most agonizing pangs of remorse. Knowing Ned, who had not intended or foreseen the fatal result of his work, lost no opportunity of impressing upon her mind that it was all her doing, and that the pony had been overfed; in which opinion he was confirmed by the doctor, who observed that there was more harm done by overfeeding among ladies' pets, whether ponies or lap-dogs, than by the more healthy abstinence of less-favoured animals. This was the last straw on the camel's back, which proved too much for Gloriana to bear. To be accused of being instrumental in

the death of the poor pony, who had been her one thought and care since she had undertaken the charge of him—whom she had fed and caressed daily with her own hands, and ridden with as much care as though in his sturdy frame had been concentrated the glory and the value of all the horses in Christendom—oh, it was too much! and the burst of grief which followed the announcement must have touched even the heart of the author of the evil, if anything so human throbbed in his villanous breast. There was a Nemesis for him in poor Taffy's death, and this last stroke of diplomacy was fatal to his own cause. Gloriana absolutely refused to make any further efforts to procure either horse or pony to supply the lost favourite's place.

'It is absurd, in an establishment consisting entirely of women, attempting to have anything to do with horses,' she said. 'It's bad enough to have to tell the Levisons that Taffy is dead, without letting them think that I have thought so little of it as to set up another already in his place.' The Levisons were, indeed, at that moment on their road home, so she knew not where to write to them to break the sad news of the pony's death.

'I do believe, Glorry, that you had rather it had been me,' said Katie, rallying, as with a pale and harassed face her sister prepared for

her walk to the park the day after the return of its inmates, to convey the first news of the misfortune herself.

'Do not laugh at me, Katie,' was the reply; 'but tell me what I shall say to Mr. Levison. I shall be quite ill with worry and anxiety before it is over.'

'I thought Taffy belonged to Miss Levison,' said Kate, archly. 'You always talked as if Harriet had lent him to you.'

'She made me the offer, of course,' answered her sister, whose neck and temples were crimson as she spoke; 'but the pony did not belong to her.'

'Then, indeed, I do not think that you have much to be afraid of,' Kate remarked, with a glowing smile. 'Oh, Glorry, what a fool you must think me if you don't know that I know all about it!'

'Hush! hush!' said Gloriana, putting her hand over her sister's mouth; 'there is nothing to know. And don't tease me, Katie, dear, for I am so very unhappy. Come to the park with me,' she added, beseechingly; and the loving little sister, who saw that she really wished it, and who was full of genuine feeling under her fun, lost no time in putting on her hat and shawl, and was ready and waiting before Gloriana, who was still lingering, had slowly descended into the hall.

(To be continued.)

ANSWER TO CHARADE.—(PAGE 90.)

'Twas at a *Ball* I Flora met
In beauty's peerless halls,
The feast was spread, the dancers set,
The music thrilled the walls.
Yet when I stood the fair beside,
(My heart beat high and glad),
She scorned me, and she turned aside,
Because I was a *lad*.

* * * * *

In anger proudly swelled my heart,
(I felt a deathlike pang),
'Twas then that with her matchless art,
A *Ballad* Flora sang.
Sweet, passing sweet, it struck my ears
Like music from above,
My pride was melted into tears,
My anger into love.

R.

TASSO AT FERRARA.*

'Veggio, quando tal vista Amor m'impetra.'

POET child of poet father,
 What thy theme for princely ears—
 Thou, about whose temples gather
 Laurels riper than thy years?
 Dost recal the proud memento
 Of thy birthplace by the sea,
 Where, in heaven-blest Sorrento,
 Life is immortality?

Exile son of sire in exile,
 Sundered from a mother's love;
 In thy years most soft and flexible
 Sentenced through the world to rove;
 Dost thou in Ferrara's palace
 Dream of having gained a home,
 Where, unchafed by plot and malice,
 Thou mayest now forget to roam?

All encharmed with joys too pleasant,
 Threading mazy canzonet,
 Dost thou, dallying with the present,
 Nor look forward, nor regret?
 Dost thou, priest of love and beauty,
 For that Leonore is fair,
 Fail to pay a client's duty,
 And too boldly, grandly dare?

Dost thou with Rinaldo's story
 Fix thy royal lady's eye;
 Fire it with great Godfrey's glory;
 Dim it when Clorind must die?
 Ah! divert thy wild ambition,
 Clog not thus thy poet-fame;
 Works of splendid erudition
 Yet should illustrate thy name!

Would that Fate, in mercy slighting
 Her own laws, would bid thee look,
 Past the Princess, at the writing
 On the wall behind the Duke!
 We, alas! with awe and pity
 Read the ban in dungeon slime:—
 'He who frees the Holy City
 Shall in chains exhaust his prime.

'Shall long years in durance languish,
 Half his life shall vex for nought;
 Though his will rebuke his anguish
 In the hell of baffled thought.
 Freedom gained shall see but little
 Left him of his hopes and youth;
 Of his joys remain no tittle—
 Save a world of love and truth!

'Late when splendour goes to meet him
 At the Eternal City's gate;
 And the holiest there would seat him,
 Where his master Petrarch sate:
 Whilst his crown waits on the altar,
 In the Capitol,—Lo! he,
 Life-awearied, scarce shall falter
 "In manus tuas, Domine!"'

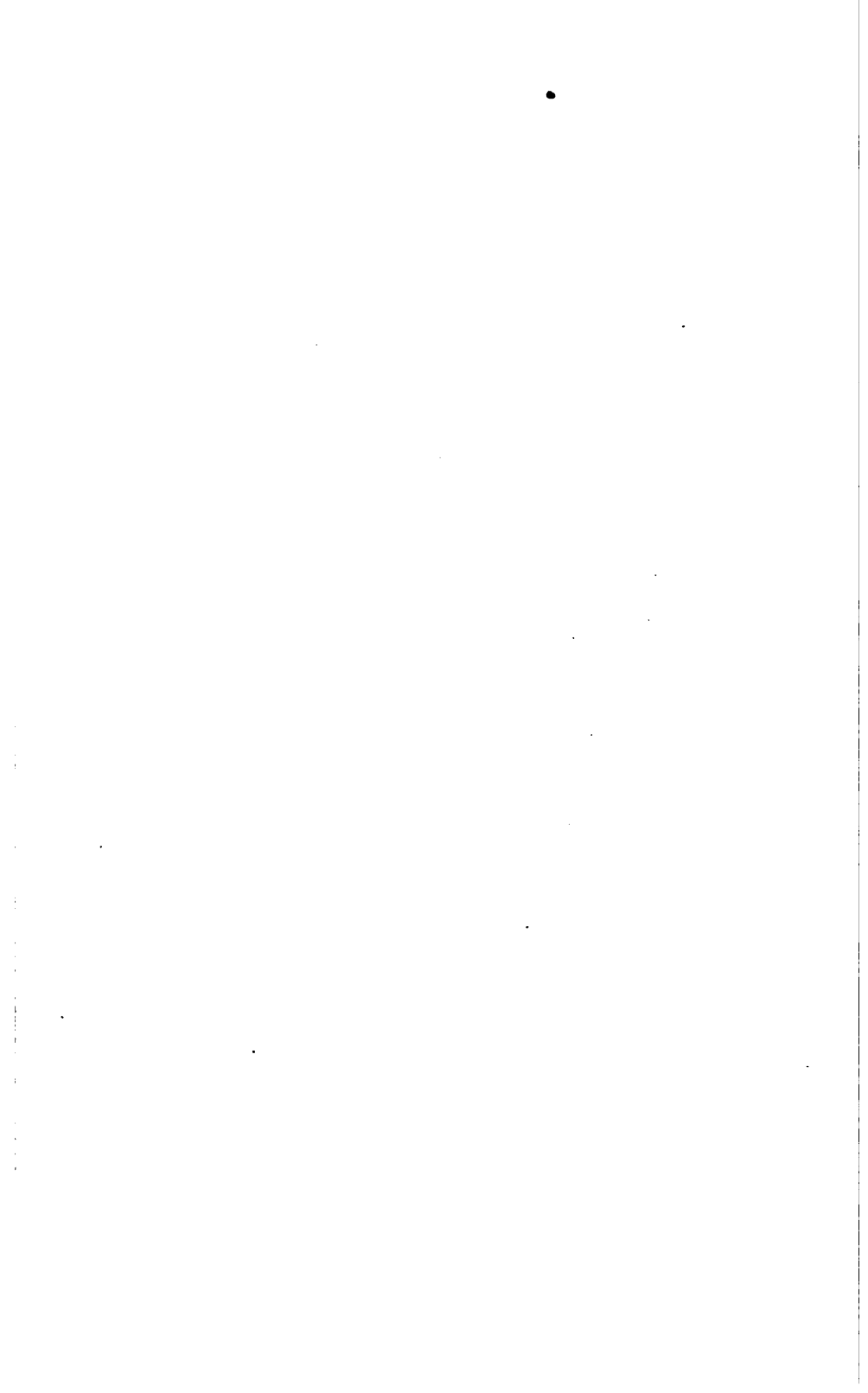
A. H. G.

* The engraving from Heilbuth's painting, by permission of Messrs. Goupil & Co.



TASSO AT FERRARA.

From the Painting by Ferdinand Heilbuth.



TWO WAYS OF LOOKING AT IT!

I.

Disenchanted.

AH! you may blush, Lady Anne,
 Cast your eyelids bashfully down!
 Do you think it matters to *me* any more
 Whether you smile or you frown?

Knowing that which I know,
 Can you wonder if I doubt
 The inference to be drawn from a smile,
 That is next of kin to a pout?

Pshaw! Am I yet a boy,
 To be caught by a pretty face?
 To see 'threads of gold' in a flaxen curl,
 Take a 'Missy' girl for a Grace?

I am disenchanted now;
 You may drop the mask, if you will:
 Or, stay—there are *other* fools in the world
 To be caught, if you wear it still!

Men were made for your sport,
 Else what use to be fair?
 'Tis only flats who can fall in love:
 Take care, my lady, take care!

Your heart may be found at home,
 When 'the right man' knocks at the gate;
 You may get paid back in your spurious coin—
 'Tis one of the tricks of Fate.

That a girl who can 'think it *fun*'
 With a score to play loose and fast,
 Sets the net too often in sight of the bird,
 And gets trapped herself at last!

II.

Faults on Both Sides.

You call me 'a heartless jilt,'—
 'A pitiless, vain coquette!'
 But there is another, and truer way
 Of looking at it yet!

Say that I trifled a while:—
 Do you, in your vain conceit,
 Think every girl who jests with a man
 Is to throw herself at his feet?

Well—we were both in fault,—

I, that I drew you on,

For the foolish whim of an idle hour,

To mock, and to smile upon ;

You, that your folly mistook

A 'will-o'-the-wisp' for a star ;

See, if a woman but lift her eyes,

How vain all these young men are !

What! would you have me say

The little words 'I love?'—

Would you have me utter a Yea for a Nay,

Then throw you off like a glove ?

Better to break at once

The chain that your folly made,

Than to linger on, in sight of the sun,—

Then find yourself in the shade.

Let us part with our foolish dream,

Since we cannot lovers be ;

Go you your way, as a true man should,

And never look back on me !

ASTLEY H. BALDWIN.

THE 'CRICKET DERBY.'—CRICKET LEGISLATION.

THE ETON REPORT—INCLUDING CRICKET.

The sum and substance of 'The Eton Report,' was that, though the Head Master claimed to sacrifice all other things to teach one thing (Classics) well, that one thing they taught very badly!—But when we furthermore read that they practised cricket five hours a day, we felt a little refreshed, and said to ourselves, There's a deal of discipline in cricket—lots of 'head work' if they play it well—a concentration of energies—a high standard of excellence—and a self-mastery which they will carry into the graver duties of life. And we proceeded to quote a line of Homer:—'The noblest rule of life,' said Sir Robert Peel, 'for any young man,' *αὐτὸν ἀπαστρέφει*—but we forgot—the same Report says on the authority of a capital cricketer, Mr. Mitchell, that the first thing an Etonian does when he meets a piece of Greek, is 'to get a

crib;' so we must paraphrase the line thus:—

'Try to do it first-rate, whatever it is, and always to come out top-sawyer.'

So we went to Lord's to see Eton do what Eton confessedly does far more in earnest than it does anything else—cricket; and felt as if this were the great Eton examination-day, and as if the prowess of these fine young fellows would justify the vaunt, 'After all, Eton works well. Don't tell us about a page more or less of Latin grammar: "A man's a man for a' that." But need we say, we were woefully disappointed?—We are not going to insist on the loss of the match with Harrow—we are not so unfair as to dwell on the heavy arrears by which that game was lost. No. The side which goes in against such a score as 240 runs rarely (especially if there

are young players) does justice to its own play; and the scores of the Etonians in the scratch match which followed between the two schools and the M. C. C. were alone enough to show that the Etonian play deserved a better account than is told by the mere scores of Eton v. Harrow. We allow, therefore, that

'Tis not in mortals to command success,'

but we do look to Eton to 'deserve it,' and annually to show before the *cognoscenti* of England a first-rate form and style of cricket. And in this respect we must say that, with much indeed to admire in the free and manly style in which the Hon. S. G. Lyttelton and others were seen to hit, we looked in vain for the form and the precision, the straightness and the science of first-rate play. There was more natural talent than headwork in the Eton play. In good batting, there are certain leading principles, to violate which is dead loss. The first is, to play perfectly straight; the second is, never to run in with hop, step, and a jump to swipe. To draw in about a yard, to give effect to a hit you could play from your ground, is the most we can allow; and even that, we believe, never pays till after school days: and Parr and Carpenter use it sparingly. The third is, never to play back at what you can command forward, and never to play forward beyond your power to command the pitch of the ball:—all this is the very grammar of cricket. But modern cricketers—witness the Gentlemen's Eleven—are badly grounded. They may have introduced an extra hit well worth having; but the first thing is to keep your wicket up; for which result you must '*play the game*;' and we could name among the past, many men, less brilliant, who played far better for the score in this most essential particular. Our complaint is, not that the Eton play was bad, but that the players did not do full justice to their talents—in other words, the form and style was defective, and showed

a want of training by some of the 'old fellows.' The training of Harrow threw the Eton quite into the shade. We have not in any match this year seen better batting—none sounder or showing better judgment; no innings with so few mistakes as that of Harrow—and their fielding was smart indeed.

It was surmised that this training, with all due credit to Nixon, was not only professional: more than one old Harrovian said he thought he could name one honourable gentleman 'who must have been looking on with his umbrella.' But how is it that among Eton 'old fellows,' or young Eton masters, no one has the emulation to insure that whatever Etonians do they shall at least do well. Their cricket we regard as a discredit, not to the playing-fields, but to the school. The report aforesaid informs us, that 'learning is not their line,' though cricket is; also, that 'Etonians are too prosperous and luxurious, as a class, to feel the stimulus necessary for study.' Now, we fear the same is true of Eton cricket. To stand and practise showy hits by the hour; to take advantage of a thin, very level and easy ground to play false cricket, without its penalties, is all very pleasant, no doubt; but when once we come to Lord's, we find that steady, thoughtful players 'have an advantage'—in other words, that on that great examination day, the flashy game breaks down, and that you can in no way 'get up' cricket 'with a crib.' No; you must practise steadily if you would play steadily: all must be sound and habitual, easy and natural, and part and parcel of yourself. This we write less as a hint for the younger than for the older Etonians. If proud of Eton and its memories we fully sympathize, only you must prove Etonians can do some things well; and we will promise never to be very sceptical about sound habits and head work in any 'fellow' of the school, when we recognize those qualities in the cricket-field.

CRICKET LEGISLATION.

(continued).

'XXIV. Or, if with any part of his person he stop the ball, which in the opinion of the umpire at the bowler's wicket, shall have been pitched in a straight line from it to the striker's wicket, and would have hit it.'

Barker would read, 'With any part of his dress, pads, or person.' Also, 'If by any noise or action the non-striker shall annoy the bowler when running to bowl or delivering the ball.' Evidently this suggestion is intended for the 'roughs' of society.

This law in 1774 stood thus: 'Or if the striker puts his leg before the wicket with a design to stop the ball, and actually prevent the ball from hitting his wicket by it.' And in the revise of 1800 thus: 'Or, if with his foot or leg he stops the ball, which the bowler, in the opinion of the umpire at the bowler's wicket, shall have pitched in a straight line to the wicket, and would have hit it.'

'XXV. If the players have crossed each other, he that runs for the wicket which is put down is out.'

Barker would append, 'But if any of the adversaries wilfully obstruct by any means either of the strikers when running, so that in the opinion of the umpire it caused such striker to be run out, the umpire shall give him "not out."'

'XXVII. A striker being run out, that run which he and his partner were attempting shall not be reckoned.'

Barker would add, 'If the strikers have crossed each other, the non-striker must go to that wicket from which the ball was struck.'

'XXIX. After the ball shall have been finally in the wicket-keeper's or bowler's hand, it shall be considered dead; but when the bowler is about to deliver the ball, if the striker at his wicket shall go outside the popping crease before such actual delivery, the said bowler may put him out, unless his bat in hand, or some part of his person, be within the said crease.'

Barker would read, 'May put him out *with ball in hand*, but not otherwise.'

Barker intends to prevent any tricky pretence to deliver the ball, and then to turn round and throw at the wicket the non-striker would not have left, but from this delusion.

We remember two several matches between the Landsdown and Mr. Budd's Eleven from Purton, near Swindon, lost by the Purton by one of their best men at the most critical point of the game, being put out for leaving his ground too soon. Great discontent was the result. Indeed the Purton bowler, after twenty years, met our friend who put him out, and inveighed against the proceeding as angrily as ever! Barker said that once at Lord's it was only the support of Lord Frederick that saved him from being hooted off the ground for the same unpopular measure. Old Harry Hampton also said that he remembered a player falling into great disgrace by the same way of putting out. If done *with ball in hand* no kind of exception can be taken; otherwise the runners would have an unfair advantage.

'XXX. If the striker be hurt, he may retire from the wicket, and have his innings at any time in that innings.' (Barker would limit it thus: 'But only if hurt in the match.') 'Another person may be allowed to stand out for him, but not to go in. No substitute in the field shall be allowed to bowl, keep wicket, stand at the point, or middle wicket, or stop behind in any case.'

There was an old law we give verbatim:—

'BATT FOOT OR HAND OVER Y^e CREASE.

'When y^e Ball has been in Hand by one of y^e Keepers or Stopers, and y^e Player has been at home He may go where he pleases till y^e next Ball is bowled. If Either of y^e Strikers is crossed in his running Ground designedly, which design must be determined by the Umpires.—N.B. The umpires may order that notch to be Scored.'

'XXXI. No substitute shall in any case be allowed to stand out or run between wickets for another person without the consent of the opposite party; and in case any person shall be allowed to run for another, the striker shall be out if either he or his substitute be off the ground in manner mentioned in Laws XVII. and XXI. while the ball is in play.'

'XXXII. In all cases where a substitute shall be allowed, the consent of the opposite party shall also be obtained as to the person to act as substitute, and the place in the field which he shall take.'

'This law,' Barker says, 'if duly considered, would have saved a match—Kent v. Notts. Kent, being a man short, brought Mr. Thackeray to field at long leg, which made a difference of some thirty runs!'

It has sometimes been a question when the ball is dead, or what constitutes 'finally settled' in the hands of the wicket-keeper. Barker would make the ball dead only when handed over to the bowler to bowl a new ball. We have seen a wicket-keeper hold the ball cunningly for the chance of the striker's raising his foot, as feeling that the play of that ball was over, and the ball dead.

Lockyer once said, 'I have sometimes had gentlemen lean on their bat, and jump over it; then I stump them flying. Sometimes they are so pleased with themselves that they will walk a little round their ground, or lift a leg to hitch up their trousers; so I wait for a chance, especially when we play against twenty-two, for then we can't afford to be particular.'

Barker's limitation actually formed part of the game at a very early period.—In 1787, of a match at Bourne Paddock, we have the following remark in a curious MS. by a cotemporary cricketer:—

'Beldham was put out in both innings in a very extraordinary manner. In the first, Purchase intended to throw the ball to Lumpy, but it fell short, and hit the wicket. If Lumpy had handled the ball, Beldham would not have been out. But in the second innings Beld-

ham's partner hit the ball straight, which just touched Lumpy's hand, and hit the wicket before Beldham had time to recover his ground.'

Barker suggests the following:—

'After the delivery of four balls, and both the strikers shall be within their ground, and the ball finally settled in the wicket-keeper's or bowler's hands, or shall have passed through the hands of any of the outer side to the bowler to commence the next Over, the ball shall be considered dead.'

'XXXIII. If any fieldsman stop the ball with his hat, the ball shall be considered dead, and the opposite party shall add five runs to their score; if any be run they shall have five in all.

'XXXIV. The ball having been hit, the striker may guard his wicket with his bat, or with any part of his body except his hands, that the 23rd law may not be disobeyed.'

The old law stood thus:—

'When ye Ball is hit up either of ye strikers may hinder ye catch in his running Ground, or if She is hit directly across ye Wickets ye Other Player may place his Body any where within ye Swing of his Batt so as to hinder ye Bowler from catching her; but he must neither Strike at her nor touch her with his hands. If a striker nips a Ball up just before him he may fall before his Wicket, or pop down his Batt before Shee comes to it, to Save it.'

'XXXV. The wicket-keeper shall not take the ball for the purpose of stumping until it have passed the wicket; he shall not move until the ball be out of the bowler's hand; he shall not by any noise incommode the striker; and if any part of his person be over or before the wicket, although the ball hit it, the striker shall not be out.'

Barker would add, (1) 'If any of the adversaries shall by any noise or action annoy the striker, he shall only be out by running out.' Also (2) 'The non-striker shall not be made "run out" by a ball struck through his wicket, unless the ball first touch the hands of one of the adversaries.'

The Law of 1816 was so explicit, we wonder it was ever altered:—

'If the striker hits the ball against his partner's wicket, when he is off his ground, it is out, provided it has previously touched the bowler's or any of the fieldsmen's hands, but not otherwise.'

'XXXVI. The umpires are the sole judges of fair or unfair play; and all disputes shall be determined by them, each at his own wicket; but in case of a catch which the umpire at the wicket bowled from cannot see sufficiently to decide upon, he may apply to the other umpire, whose opinion shall be conclusive.'

In 1793 the law was as follows:—

'The umpires are the sole judges of fair and unfair play, and all disputes shall be determined by them; each at his own wicket. But in case of a catch, which the umpire at the wicket cannot see sufficiently to decide upon, he may apply to the other umpire, whose opinion is conclusive.'

'XXXVII. The umpires in all matches shall pitch fair wickets; and the parties shall toss up for choice of innings. The umpires shall change wickets after each party has had one innings.'

Barker would add:—

'The umpires shall change wickets after each party has had one innings, or at any time during the match, with the consent of both parties. They shall allow no more than half a minute between each ball, two minutes for each striker to come in, and ten minutes between each innings, when the party refusing to play shall lose the match. If either of the strikers think that he or his partner is not fairly out, he may appeal to the umpires.'

'XXXVIII. They shall allow two minutes for each striker to come in, and ten minutes between each innings. When the umpire shall call "Play," the party refusing to play shall lose the match.

'XXXIX. They are not to order a striker out unless appealed to by the adversaries;

'XL. But if one of the bowler's feet be not on the ground behind the bowling crease and within the return crease when he shall deliver the ball, the umpire at

his wicket, unasked, must call "No ball."

'XLI. If either of the strikers run a short run, the umpire must call "One short."

'XLII. No umpire shall be allowed to bet.

'XLIII. No umpire is to be changed during a match, unless with the consent of both parties, except in case of violation of the 42nd law; then either party may dismiss the transgressor.'

1747 to 1816.—'That the umpire at the bowler's wicket shall be first applied to, to decide on all catches.'

The practice had been to ask the umpire at the striker's wicket, and never to appeal. The following will prove that the custom of appealing from one umpire to the other in the case of a catch was not according to the earliest rules. In the most ancient book of scores extant, containing matches from the year 1772, we extract the following:—

'Kent against Hampshire, 1780.—The umpire at the wicket at which Aylward stood declared that he could not tell whether he hit the ball or not; and it was referred to May, the umpire at the other end, who gave him out. This was a mode of proceeding unprecedented in my remembrance, nor could any one I met with recollect a reference of this nature. It was the opinion of most people that the second umpire ought not to have decided it.'

'XLIV. After the delivery of four balls the umpire must call "Over," but not until the ball shall be finally settled in the wicket-keeper's or bowler's hand; the ball shall then be considered dead; nevertheless, if an idea be entertained that either of the strikers is out, a question may be put previously to, but not after, the delivery of the next ball.

'XLV. The umpire must take especial care to call "No ball" instantly upon delivery; "Wide ball" as soon as it shall pass the striker.'

Barker would add:—

'1. If the umpire call "Over" before the right number of balls shall have been bowled, either party may demand the proper number to be bowled, which may have been agreed upon.

'2. If the bowler is about to bowl more balls than the proper number, either party may demand the umpire to call "Over."'

'3. Though the umpire has called "Over," still if any of the outer side think that either of the strikers is out, an appeal may be made to the umpire any time before but not after the delivery of the next ball.'

In some old laws (date unknown) entitled 'Ye Game of Cricket as settled by ye Cricket Club at ye "Star and Garter" in Pall Mall,' we read the following:—

'LAWS FOR YE UMPIRES.

'To allow 2 Minutes for each man to come in when one is out, and 10 Minutes between Each Hand. To mark ye Ball that it may not be changed. They are sole judges of all outs and ins, of all fair and unfair Play of frivolous delays, of all hurts whether real or pretended and are discretionally to allow what time they think Proper before ye Game goes on again. In case of a real hurt to a Striker they are to allow another to come in and the Person hurt to come in again, But are not to allow a fresh Man to Play on either side on any Account. They are sole judges of all hindrances, crossing ye Players in running, and Standing unfair to Strike and in case of hindrance may order a Notch to be Scored. They are not to order any man out unless appealed to by one of ye Players. These Laws are to ye Umpires Jointly. Each Umpire is ye Sole Judge of all Nips and Catches Ins and outs good or bad runs at his own Wicket and his determination shall be absolute and he shall not be changed for another Umpire without ye Consent of both Sides When ye 4 Balls are Bowled he is to call over These laws are separately When both Umpires shall call Play 3 Times, 'tis at ye Peril of giving ye Game from them that refuse Play.'

As a record of 'cricket in the olden time,' Frederick Lillywhite favours us with the following from his very valuable 'Scores and Biographies,' a book of which the secretary of every club should order a copy—admirably done, and inter-

spersed with curious notices from beginning to end:—

'A few days since we had the pleasure of inspecting a simple but highly interesting relic, the property of W. J. Humphry, Esq., of Donnington. It is simply an old silk pocket-handkerchief, for many years in the possession of Mr. Daniel King, a "formidable" cricketer of this city, who, on his death bed, in 1836,* requested the token should be given to his apt pupil, Mr. Humphry, a liberal supporter of the "noble art," and still a useful player. The handkerchief is supposed to be more than 100 years old, and on it is well represented an eleven at play, set out much the same as they would be in the present day, to slow bowling. There are but two stumps, and the bats have broad hatchet-shaped ends. All the players are admirably delineated, and are, doubtless, a faithful representation of some celebrated eleven of that day. The umpires and scorers are dressed in the style of the early part of the 18th century, the latter gracefully reclining on the turf, with their "notch sticks" in their hands. On the border of the handkerchief the laws of the game are printed in the quaint style of the time. We append a verbatim one. It will be seen that the alterations are not material, considering the lapse of time. The handkerchief is now placed in an elegant frame, and from the very tender condition of the article, Mr. Shipley has shown much skill in the manipulation.

YE LAWS OF YE GAME OF CRICKET.

'Ye pitching of ye first wicket is to be determined by ye cast of a piece of money.

'When ye first wicket is pitched, and ye popping crease cut, which must be exactly 3 feet 10 inches from ye wicket, ye other wicket is to be pitched directly opposite, at 22 yards distance, and ye other popping crease cut 3 feet 10 inches before it.

'Ye bowling creases must be cut in a direct line from each stump.

'Ye stumps must be 22 inches

* Daniel King died on June 26, 1836, at the age of 53.

long, and ye ball 6 inches. Ye ball must weigh between 5 and 6 ounces. When ye wickets are both pitched, and all ye creases cut, ye party that wins ye toss up may order which side shall go in first at his option. Ye bowler must deliver ye ball with one foot behind ye crease even with ye wicket, and when he has bowled one ball or more, shall bowl to ye number of 4 before he changes wickets, and he shall change but once in ye same innings. He may order ye player that is in at his wicket to stand on which side of it he pleases at a reasonable distance.

'If he delivers ye ball with his hinder foot over ye bowling crease, ye umpire shall call no ball though she be struck, or ye player is bowled out, which he shall do without being asked, and no person shall have any right to ask him. If ye wicket is bowled down its out. If he strikes or treads down, or he falls himself upon his wicket in striking (but not in over-running), its out. A stroke or nipp over or under his ball, or upon his hands (but not arms), if ye ball be held before he touches ground, though she be hug'd to the body, its out.'

'If in striking both his feet are over the popping crease, and his wicket put down, except his batt is down within, its out. If he runs out his ground to hinder a catch, its out. If a ball is nipp'd and he strikes her again wilfully before she comes to ye wicket, its out. If the players have crossed each other, he that runs for ye wicket that is put down, is out. If in running a match, the wicket is struck down by a throw before his foot, hand, or batt, is over the popping crease, or a stump hit by ye ball, though the ball was down, its out. But if ye ball is down before, he that catches ye ball must strike a stump out of ground, ball in hand, then its out. If ye striker touches or takes up ye ball before she is lain quite still, unless asked by ye bowler, or wicket keeper, its out. When ye ball has been in hand by one of ye keepers or stoppers, and ye player has been at home, he may go where he pleases till ye next ball is bowled. If either of ye strikers is cross'd in his run-

ning ground designedly, which design must be determined by ye umpires. N. B. Ye umpire may order the notch to be scored. When ye ball is hit up, either of ye strikers may hinder ye catch in his running ground, or if she's hit directly across ye wicket, ye other player may place his body anywhere within ye swing of ye batt, so as to hinder ye bowler from catching her; but he must neither strike at her, nor touch her with his hands.

'If a striker nipp's a ball up just before him, he may fall before his wicket, or pop down his bat, before she comes to it, to save it.

'Ye bail hanging on one stump, though ye ball hit ye wicket, its not out. Ye wicket-keepers shall stand at a reasonable distance behind ye wicket, and shall not move till ye ball is out of ye bowler's hand, and shall not by any noise incommode ye striker: and if his hands, knees, feet, or head, be over or before ye wicket, though ye ball hit it, it shall not be out. To allow two minutes for each man to come in when one is out, and ten minutes between each hand. To mark ye ball that it may not be changed. They are sole judges of all outs and ins, of all fair and unfair play, of all frivolous delays, of all hurts, whether real or pretended, and are discretionally to allow what time they think proper before ye game goes on again. In case of a real hurt to a striker, they are to allow another to come in, and ye person hurt to come in again, but are not to allow a fresh man to play on either side on any account. They are sole judges of all hindrances, crossing ye players in running, and standing unfair to strike, and in cases of hindrances may order a notch to be scored. They are not to order any man out, unless appealed to by any one of ye players. These laws are to ye umpires jointly. Each umpire is ye sole judge of all nips and catches, ins and outs, good or bad runs at his own wicket, and his determination shall be absolute, and he shall not be changed for another umpire without ye consent of both sides. When the four balls are bowled, he is to call over. These laws are separately. When both

umpires call play three times, 'tis at ye peril of giving ye game from them that refuse to play.'

'XLVII. When one of the strikers shall have been put out, the use of the bat shall not be allowed to any person until the next striker shall come in.'

The following is a note appended to the M. C. C. Laws:—

'The Committee of the Marylebone Club think it desirable that, previously to the commencement of a match, one of each side should be declared the manager of it; and that the new laws with respect to substitutes may be carried out in a spirit of fairness and mutual concession, it is their wish that such substitutes be allowed in all reasonable cases, and that the umpire should inquire if it is done with the consent of the manager of the opposite side.

'Complaints having been made that it is the practice of some players when at the wicket to make holes in the ground for a footing, the Committee are of opinion that the umpires should be empowered to prevent it.'

It was, many years since, a stipulation of the M. C. C. that they would play no matches without professional umpires. The experience of the All England Elevens, even in these days of advanced civilization, shows the wisdom of the rule. Far north the idea is difficult to eradicate that a Yorkshire Eleven has an umpire of their own, as a kind of Old Bailey witness, to swear for Yorkshire through thick and thin. This reminds us of what anyone may read in Twiss's 'Life of Eldon,' that on the Northern Circuit one jury gave him verdicts all day long, because he was a countryman.

Late experience has shown that professional umpires involve a conventional kind of decisions instead of right decisions. Men 'who live to please, must please to live.' An umpire at Lord's simply reflects the opinion of the M. C. C., or what he supposes to be the opinion. A certain bowler 'has been allowed, and the gentlemen seem to like it;

therefore,' said Caldecourt, 'what does it matter to me?' Caldecourt had once got into hot water by putting the right of private judgment to the test; and ever since *quid refert dum felix sis* has been the prevailing sentiment among professionals as regards their employers.

Certainly it might sometimes be difficult to find an amateur to stand as umpire; neither would it be any improvement if he were always a member of the club, which gets up the match: but certainly if all 'local judges' were deemed disqualified, and if independent men were drawn from a distance to stand umpires, the bowling would never have been as wild and as dangerous as now.

We object, therefore, to professionals as not independent; though in point of ability to judge, few amateurs could compete with them. An umpire requires practice, to concentrate attention on every ball: and no small part of an umpire's qualification consists in knowing just where danger lurks, and where a question is likely to arise.

* * Edward Mills Grace, Esq. (whose Portrait we gave in our last number), was born at Downend, near Bristol, Gloucestershire, Nov. 27, 1841. His scores for the last four seasons have been respectively, in 1860, 1,372; in 1861, 1,747; in 1862, 2,190; in 1863, 32,074. But his efficiency as a batsman will perhaps yet more clearly appear if we say that we find his average, in twelve first-class matches last season, nearly forty runs an innings. While playing for All England v. Eighteen of Manchester and professional bowlers, he went in first and carried out his bat for within three of a hundred runs. We have already criticised his style, and related his great achievement with bat and ball at Canterbury. We may add, that his fielding is as good as his batting. The best judges have pronounced that for attention to every man's play, and for judgment in placing himself, as well as for safe hands when the ball comes, they would as willingly trust Mr. Grace to foil a favourite hit as any man in England. In Australia he also showed himself to be a fine wicket keeper, though he failed to sustain his reputation as a batsman.

YACHTING.

CHAPTER I.

SEA-LOVING ENGLAND AND HER PLEASURE NAVY.

CENTURIES of civilization, that have brought in their train luxury, shopkeeping, and a marvellous commerce that demands for its maintenance the work of hand and brain, have not extinguished that passion to which our country owes its greatest glory. Man and boy, the Anglo-Saxon race loves the sea. At heart we are sailors yet. Not long ago I visited what was once my school playground. Lying under an old elm-tree reading in the soft light of a tranquil summer evening, I saw a pale-faced boy. His limbs were small, his face delicately white, and his eyes of the mildest blue. No one would have supposed him to be a boy of much spirit; but a little conversation soon showed that a heart, fired with the spirit that animated those grand old sailors of Devon, whose lives he was reading, beat beneath his jacket. He was panting for the sea. For weeks his reading had been the histories of sea-fights, voyages and travels, shipwrecks and storms, desert islands, and wild adventures among strange people, speaking strange tongues, hiding in dense forests, paddling on broad, expanding rivers flowing under the shadows of huge mountains. Volume upon volume that spake of these things he had devoured by day; at night he had realized them in dreams, and with the morning awoke with the sea-fever still upon him. Had he been a less carefully disciplined boy than he was he would undoubtedly have contributed his mite to that mighty list of English lads who 'ran away and went to sea.' Speak to him of hardships he would have to bear, dangers to undergo, difficulties to surmount, and he would tell you those were the things he wanted.

What I have called the sea-fever in the pale-faced boy is an experience which most of us have. It comes as surely as the measles, and generally lasts rather longer. It is common to youth but not confined to any particular age. Like an epidemic, it rages fiercely, and is catching; it runs through a household, a coterie of friends, or a school. When it comes, Greek and Latin grammars, geographies, and arithmetic books are detestable and might as well be put away. What are

they to the achievements of Cooke, Columbus, and Drake!

'Oh, papa, do let me go for a "middy!"' is the cry that has startled many a Paterfamilias who has designed a seat in the bank, or the counting-house, or a University career for his son. But since there are required but a very small number of midshipmen, the boys generally have to take to the desk or college, the pulpit or bar, or sick-chamber; and though this yearning for the adventurous life of the sea rarely dies out, it is softened by time, and the lads who thought of running away to Liverpool become excellent parsons, active lawyers, and unromantic medical men. I started northward once myself.

As this is the earliest manifestation in favour of the sea so it is the strongest. A calmer love takes its place—a love that leads us annually down to sea-beaches and rocks. But everywhere our liking for the sea and the seamen manifests itself; on our stage where the sorrows of Black-eyed Susan, played perhaps to audiences long familiar with it, draw tears from pit and gallery, where it is always customary to make the 'rough and ready' sailor the good genius of the distressed damsel. Our best English artists' best pictures are sea scenes; and what songs are so often heard over bench and loom, or at the forge, as those that relate to 'British Oak,' 'Battles and Breezes,' and 'Wooden Walls?' Practically there is a far higher manifestation of our proclivities for the sea. It is the constitution of our Pleasure Navy—a navy that is at present rapidly increasing, and that has already a far greater numerical strength than is generally known or supposed.

Yachting is exclusively a pastime of the rich: it has always been so and probably always will. Rowing, the sister sport, is common to all classes. The collegian doffs his gown and hurries down to the Isis or the Cam, the professional man in his hour of evening leisure, the hard-working mechanic in his Saturday half, row. Cricket is yet more universal. Hunting draws together peers, farmers, tradesmen, and nondescripts; billiards has its

hordes of blacklegs; but yachting stands alone in its exclusiveness. Exclusiveness is no merit. The glorious equality and fraternity of the cricket-field, where the only acknowledged rank is that of skill in the game, are facts of which to be proud. But this or anything like it can never be the case on the ocean. Yachting demands a large expenditure of time and money, it cannot be taken up at odd half-hours or days. It is a science, and he who would excel in it must take off his coat and begin at the bottom of the ladder, and by the time he reaches the top, he will be a perfect sailor who would pass with credit the Admiralty examination. A yacht is a very costly luxury. But what a luxury! So trim, so graceful, and so swift! Look at the 'Albertine' (155 tons), Lord Londesborough's beautiful schooner, at the 'Water Lily' (105 tons), Lord Alfred Paget's yawl, and at the cutter, 'Astarte' (75 tons), when under full sail. The proportions of an Oaks favourite are scarce more delicate and beautifully symmetrical. Yachts are to ships as Venus to Vulcan, and cutter yachts to schooner yachts as sweet and supple seventeen is to the matured figure of ten years later. Given the beauty of the boat, there is, to quote the words of the popular song—

'The life on the rolling deep,'

the plunging of the boat amid the heaving waves, the storm to battle with, the wind to conquer, and over all there is just that element of danger which somehow charms Englishmen. With the 'wind dead in your teeth,' as nautical men say, you sail on. There is a triumph of mind over a mighty element!

I have somewhere read that a great French novelist having to frame a plot for a tale—and his tales *have* plots—betakes himself to the sea and stretches himself on deck. It is an excellent plan; nowhere is man so much out of from the conventional and material world as at sea. The waves rocking the vessel sing a most sweet lullaby; and nowhere is the 'cloudscape' so grand. The sensuous dream-world of the lotus-eaters is not so delicious as that produced by the motion of a yacht on the blue Mediterranean with a blue sky above. All sweet fancies seem to come there, and to shape themselves, as all that is highest and best does shape itself, into poetry, adapting itself to the measured rhythm in which the vessel moves among the waves breaking on the prow: and the waking from the dream is grand when the storm

comes, and low clouds, intensely black, rise up, and every hand is needed to execute successive orders with the utmost alacrity; and the wind, that seems now to bear the roar of a mighty discharge of ordnance, and now to sigh solemnly as though in its fury it had done some awful deed, drowns the never-failing answer of the mariner, 'Ay! Ay! sir.'

With the practice and theory of yachting, it would be impossible to deal in a single article; but there is one aspect in which it ought to be looked at—as a nursery for the Royal Navy. It is not generally known how great a one it is, and how its dimensions are growing with every year.

The progress made by the Royal Thames Yacht Club, which occupies the highest position of any, presents a striking view of this. This club, established 1823, in 1838 had but twenty-four yachts; it has now two hundred, representing 14,000 tons burthen. Something over a sailor for every ton is required to man them, and there is thus in the employ of this club alone 1,400 thoroughly trained and efficient seamen ready, if need should arise, to transfer their services to the Royal Navy. They are all picked men, and the yacht clubs of the United Kingdom must number altogether a vast body of such seamen, who, during the summer months, are constantly at sea, cruising far away, or running races which demand the utmost activity and smartness round the coast at home. The royal yacht clubs of the kingdom could probably muster a fleet of one thousand five hundred vessels, nearly all of them being beautifully built, perfect in equipment, and ably commanded and manned. To this fleet large additions are being made every year. Since 1853 there have been upwards of four hundred vessels added. During the last ten years the number of annual additions to the fleet of yachts has more than doubled, and at the present time there are many new ones building. There are upwards of a score of royal yacht clubs having stations on the British coast, club houses, agents in foreign ports, and annual prize regattas. Other clubs are forming and formed which will doubtless have the Admiralty warrant shortly. There are also royal yacht clubs at Canada, Halifax, and Sydney. They have not large squadrons, and *Le Cercle Nautique de la Méditerranée*, which has its station at Cannes, numbers only a couple of yawls and twenty cutters.

It is Englishmen who make a play-

fellow of the sea and toy ships to sail upon it. The sea breezes sweep our island and help to brace up our frames to harden us and make us what we are as a nation. The sea brings us wealth as it has brought us glory. What wonder that we love it, and build boats to sail upon it, and display a rivalry as keen as that in the races that take place on the green turf! Speed on the ocean is as valuable as speed in the hunting-field, on the road, and on the railway. Rival builders exert themselves to produce swift yachts, and rival yachtsmen to make the most of every inch of canvas and every puff of wind. It is the rule of the day to give prizes for everything. The yachtsmen are not behindhand in these particulars. Last year prizes of the value, in the aggregate, of 4,646*l.* were sailed for; this season the sum will probably be larger, and royal favours are to be extended to the sport. Not that the yachtsmen care for the prizes much. They are quite subordinate. But to possess the swiftest yacht and the smartest crew is held to be an object worthy of ambition in the highest, and so it is! Proud of his pastime, the yachtsman loves his yacht as he loves his horse or his dog. He speaks of it with an affection, ridiculous when bestowed upon so much wood, iron, rope, and canvas, but perfectly intelligible and reasonable when applied to the vessel which for weeks in summer is his 'home' on the sea, in which he has braved many storms, surmounted many dangers, in which he has won races and carried fair ladies down rivers and over seas to the classic lands of the south; upon which he has had to trust in wild storms when only perfect obedience to her helm and promptness in putting about have saved her from destruction. These are the sort of histories, very happy ones for the most part, which attach to yachts, and have to be considered before we pass a verdict upon a man who even goes so far as to declare he loves 'Undine' or 'Astarte.'

The English yachts go almost everywhere in our quarter of the globe. They perform all sorts of distinguished services. Her Majesty the Queen has four. Stately, pretty little steam yachts they are. The 'Fox' that was fitted out for the Arctic search was a yacht. When Garibaldi was to be borne back to Caprera it was an English yacht that took him. When the 'Alabama' came out to fight the fatal battle with the 'Kearsarge,' the 'Deerhound,' an English yacht, was there to see and eventually to save. Early in June the

Thames yachting season commences and lasts a month or six weeks. During that period a fleet of yachts, such as is scarcely gathered together in any other spot, assembles, and when the racing is over they cruise round the coast of England or the Continent, dropping anchor occasionally in some bay to prepare for races. All the fashionable seaside towns get up regattas now. Very charming they are, too, for from the high rocks it very often happens, as at the numerous Devonshire meetings, and at the Guernsey one, that the fleet can be seen all through the race. Still the Thames season once over, the yachts get scattered far and wide all round the European coast.

There has been established at Gravesend a most convenient clubhouse for yachtsmen, called the Union Yacht Club House—a club in the Pall Mall, not the aquatic, sense. A gentleman largely interested in yachting has devoted his energy to the formation of this upon a most excellent basis. It occupies a good site, its internal arrangements are very complete, and accommodation has been provided for ladies. This is a very admirable part of the plan. Ladies are learning the mysteries of sailing from yachtsmen. You would be astonished, my dear Bachelor, to hear how charming nautical terms become on rosy feminine lips—and they wish, either on yacht or steamer, to see the races. Now these races often have to start at a very early hour in the morning, and it is therefore desirable that the ladies should be provided with accommodation at Gravesend, where their brothers, and cousins, and other bold young yachtsmen whose relations are not quite so easily definable, are located. The club has been founded upon liberal principles, and the subscription is one that will not confine its usefulness, as its members are not bound to be yacht owners.

From a very small beginning in 1720, when the Cork Yacht Club was founded, has grown up our present splendid Pleasure Navy. For nearly a hundred years the Cork Club had the sport entirely to itself; but in 1815 was founded the Royal Squadron, and eight years later the now *puissant* Thames Club. The first Admiralty warrant was obtained by the Cork Club November 2, 1831, and from that time dates the real growth and popularity of the pastime as it is now practised. It is a noble sport, nobly maintained, and thoroughly adapted to our national taste.

CHAPTER II.

O'ER THE GLAD WATERS OF THE DARK
BLUE SEA.

The glad waters to which I particularly refer in the present instance lie between the Lower Hope, Gravesend, and Harwich Harbour.

The light of a morning, sunless, cold, and grey as November, but which the almanac informs me is the morning of June 4, is on the water. Here and there a sombre barge is creeping slowly citywards, making the most of the remaining tide. All else is perfectly still in the Hope. The sun should have risen long ago, but the only outward and visible sign of the fact is a solitary patch of pale brown in the east, which is not unlike the colour of the dirty sails flapping about the barges. A fleet of thirty yachts, riding to their own anchors just off the Essex shore, moored in tiers of three, dot the water. Every sail is furled, no 'hand' is on board; the taper masts pointing upward make them look like so many inverted umbrellas. The wind is N.N.E., and very little of it. It might convey us to Harwich in a week, but the 'point is debatable. The hour, to be precise, is 4:30, A.M., a ghostly hour, and the yachts resemble so many phantom ships.

A hatchboat, bearing a white flag, has appeared, and produced an effect scarcely less wonderful than that brought about by the touch and kiss of the lover in Tennyson's 'Day Dream.' All is bustle and activity; every deck is peopled; men are running up and down masts as nimbly as squirrels, affixing flags and sheets of white canvas; and all the men are crying simultaneously 'Ay, ay, sir!' 5:20. White flag hauled down, red flag hauled up. Oh, for a breeze! All the captains watching the hatchboat, for when the red flag falls the greatest ocean race ever run will commence. 5:25. The red flag is down, anchors are up, foresails are setting, and all the yachts are canting to the southward. All at once, like so many ballet-girls in white turning their heads one way, and a breeze of morning moves from N.E., and lets a little glimmer of hope into the hearts of owners and captains of the big schooners, for with a light wind they will have no chance against the 'flying fifty' cutters. Five minutes back the yachts were specks upon the water, now the white canvas covers all, and they are beautiful as a cluster of snowdrops in the early spring. The land-breeze is carrying them out to sea

Reach. A flight of pigeons does not keep itself more compact. The stately 'Albertine,' with its many-times triumphant flag, White with the Red Maltese Cross, the trim 'Glance,' the sprightly 'Volante,' the sedate 'Aquiline,' how beautiful they are! 'Astarte' is coquetting with 'Madcap,' and the 'Water Lily,' failing to catch the wind in her sails, is as still as a veritable flower riding on the ripples of a gentle stream, fast rooted, and only seeming to progress, till the yachts at her stern have passed and her sails fill with wind.

For a yachting match there requires three good things—a good fleet, good sailors, and good wind. If the latter is accompanied by sharp showers that soak the sails so much the better. But alas! the morning of the 4th of June was very calm. Schooners and yawls soon fell behind. The 'Glance,' 'Volante,' and 'Vindex,' lightest cutters in the race, went ahead, and the whole fleet on the port tack looked like a long flight of swans reaching a mile or more. It was a lovely sight. But when they had passed the Medway they got into slack water; some stood far out to the east, some stood in to the western shore, and parted to come together again only in Harwich harbour. Yet it was a gallant race between the cutters, four of which were struggling for place, making short quick boards on and off the shore, trying to take the wind out of each other's sails, trying every art the thorough sailor knows. Now it was 'Glance' that led, now 'Volante,' with 'Vindex' and the 'Surf' at their sterns, running dangerously near the Maplin sands. The wind rose and fell, and with every rise the 'Albertine' came up space, and with every fall went back again. 'Glance' ran upon the sands, and got off again smartly, but not till her rival, 'Volante,' had passed her. Then they fought again, board and board they made, and it was as if two skilful jockeys on two noble horses ran neck and neck, and the highest effort of each failed to secure an advantage.

Where were the twenty-one that started? Scattered like a form of schoolboys called from their studies to the graver work of life. Like schoolboys, too, many that gave the brightest promise had fallen by the way, and were not discernible even on the dim horizon. One had become hopelessly fast on the sands at the very moment she seemed winning, others had gone on the wrong tack; it was no longer a race of twenty but of two. At noontide the sun looked out between two gray clouds, and—

'A gust of wind sterte up behind;'

but it was but a feeble gust, and it did not last long, and the 'Volante' had now made a certain triumph over the 'Glance,' and was far ahead, and continued so till they furled their sails in the harbour to the sound of beating drums and cheers that hung about the gray church and hill of Harwich, where the first yacht, the beautiful 'Volante,' that had been sailed so well, arrived at 3 h. 6 m. 30 s. P.M., or ten hours after leaving the Lower Hope. Every sail was set, and the original fleet had been joined on the ocean by the yachts of the Harwich Club, and many others. There were fifty of the finest craft in the world sailing gently round for the harbour on a lovely sea under a bright sun. It was a charming scene.

Thus ended this great race; the first of what will be a long series, eventually looked forward to with an interest only less than that which is felt in other great events of a like character for reasons already set forth. It ended in an unexpected manner. The cutters triumphed over the schooners because there was little or no wind. The lightest weight in the race was 'Glance,' 36 tons. Others as low as 10 tons had been entered, but at midnight before the morning of the race the wind was howling, rain beating down, and a tempest threatening. With such weather the light cutters would have had no chance against the broader canvas of the two-masted vessels, and they did not start. Had they, it is quite possible they would have been triumphant, for at no time was there a sufficient breeze to develop all the sailing powers of the small yachts that sailed in the fleet.

A dandy rigged vessel called, but improperly, a yawl, the 'Whirlwind,' won the prize in the schooner class. She was only 77 tons, and passed the guard ship an hour earlier than the schooner 'Albertine.'

Of all sports yachting is most dependent upon the state of the weather. Wind and rain, that are the terror of rowing men and cricketers, that spoil the Derby and the Ascot, make the glory of a yacht match. They may not suit the visitors, who come to see a 'pretty sight;' but how the schooners bound along, with every sail as tight as a drum, every cord as stiff as a harp-string, and the waves breaking on the prow, and a long white line lingering in their wake! In such weather one of the most memorable Irish matches was sailed. It occupied part of two days and two whole nights. When the evening of the first descended, dark clouds rose, the wind howled so that orders

had to be shouted at the top of the voice. The rain beat down wildly, heavily; the full surge of the mighty Atlantic had to be met. A large squadron had started, but in the intense darkness no trace of any yacht could be discovered, no sound heard but the howling of the tempest in the rigging, and the wild tumult of the waves. The labouring bark seemed to

'Climb hills of seas,
Olympus high, and duck again as low
As hell's from heaven.'

To stand on deck without clinging to the bulwarks was a difficult task, so powerful was the nor' wester blowing in the summer night. From sunset to sunrise all was a blank; no yacht knew where its competitors were, for the clouds were low and of an inky darkness, and the few flashes of lightning dazzled the eyes and showed only the white glare of the angry ocean lashed into a fury by ugly cross-currents! Sails were torn and had to be replaced, masts sprung, and the timbers creaked, but like an elfin thing the yacht went on careering, dancing, scattering the foam from her. On through the darkness and the storm, till ashy pale the morning came, and the wind changed its fierce howl into a solemn moan inexpressibly sad. The night had its glory and its terror, and the pale morning and the later golden light that was shed upon the waves produced a strange feeling, a mingled sense of gratitude, relief, and awe,—a thrill once experienced never to be forgotten; for then it was possible to see the wild frantic ocean on which we had been sailing. Every observable living thing seemed to feel the blessing of light, the porpoises on the water, the gulls screaming around, and the cormorant

'A blot in heaven, flying high.'

That was perhaps the grandest yacht match ever sailed; for though the fury of the tempest abated with the light of morning, there was still a powerful wind to bear the yachts over the long Atlantic swells and between the Saltee Islands. The system of signals by which yachts can now ask questions and get intelligible answers by means of flags was not then in use. And every yacht's crew was in doubt and fear as to the fate of their fellows in the race. The night had been wild enough to dismantle sturdier vessels than any in the fleet. But their very lightness had been their safety, and morning saw them still sailing proudly, beautifully on. A calmer night followed. The positions of the yachts made the race exciting. It is too

far in the past to be detailed here, but at the end of that two hundred miles' sail through darkness and storm three yachts were only divided by a few yards, and each struggled hard for victory. It was a race to remember and talk of when the wind howls in the chimney and the fire is bright on the hearth.

'Wanted, a wind!' has been the cry so far this season. The Prince of Wales and his sailor brother, Prince Alfred, went on the yacht of the Commodore of the Thames Club to see one of the best matches recently. Scarce a breath of wind blew, the sails flapped on the masts as sheets flap in a laundry drying ground; the yachts were becalmed, and could not reach the Nore. There was neither wind 'nor motion,' and we lay

'As idle as a painted ship
Upon a painted ocean.'

And when we had drifted about for some time, and the tide had ceased, we swung round and went back. A little breeze sprang up and filled the sails, rather improving matters. Slowly dropping down the river, going to a far country, we passed an emigrant ship and her great human freight, with the tears of parting still in their eyes, crowded on the deck—they saw the Prince and the yachts and the steamers filled with holiday-makers going *back home*, and raised a cheer, that was half a cry, over the land they were leaving. It was their last earnest look upon a group of their happy countrymen and women. The contrast was very strong. They were mostly the poorer sort of emigrants. Poor people are universally much attached to their country and homes, and feel a keen pang when they bid good-bye to the one and break up the other. All this occurred to the racers and the visitors, as they turned their glasses on the groups of emigrants—families, mothers with babies, and little brothers and sisters. Then they raised a mighty ringing cheer, accompanied by cries of 'May you be happy in the land you're going to!'

The slender interest which the springing up of the breeze had created in the race died away again after this little incident,

only to have a feeble revival when the 'Albertine' rounded the buoy, and the Prince sent for Lord Londesborough, to receive from his hands the prize, for which there had been literally no race, on board the 'Water Lily.'

Such is yachting. On a calm day tamer than the tamest hunt when the scent is bad; on a squally day as inspiring and exciting as the wildest brush across country ever enjoyed in Leicestershire.

But this is only the racing of yachts. There is the cruising, which is the happiest possible method of travelling. A summer in the southern seas in a yacht is the highest luxury I know or can imagine of its kind. You may enter every classic bay, see in all their grandeur the wild rocks, walk round the islands, and sail up the rivers. That is the way to enjoy one of our noblest pastimes. Take the earliest opportunity of testing practically the truth of my statement, reader, and thank me for the suggestion, and *don't publish your reflections*. Travelling humanity is too prone to that weakness—it is a weakness and a vanity—already. Were it otherwise I might here print some extracts from the log of a certain yacht. Log literature is charming. Bold, terse, and vigorous are the sentences. A caustic reviewer might envy the yachtsman's skill in the economy of words. A novelist would occupy a dozen pages with the account of a storm, which a yachtsman describes as effectually in a score or so of words. What can be more powerful than this?—

'Sunset. Storm coming. Wind N.N.E. Squally. Midnight. Storm come. Very fierce. Lightning incessantly. Balloon-jib torn to shreds. Topmast broke. 11.15 P.M. Shipped a sea. Cannot live two hours longer if storm lasts. Enormous sea on. 2.40 A.M. Storm over. Moonlight. Crew repairing sails.—All right.'

'All right!' This brief glance at yachting can come to no happier ending than the storm thus briefly chronicled in the yachtsman's log. May every one that breaks over our great Pleasure Navy have as fortunate a *finis*!

J. D. C.



ACROSS THE CHANNEL.

CHAPTER I.

IF my Aunt Theodosia had proposed a visit to Timbuctoo, she could scarcely have met with greater opposition. Uncle Gilbert was dead against it,—Aunt Jane's feeble treble was raised in angry protest. 'Go to France, indeed! *Females* were satisfied to remain at home in her young days.'

Aunt Jane is always drawing invidious comparisons between her young days and mine. She mourns over the decadence of the present generation. She bewails the habits, customs, manners, and dress of Young England.

Her youth was in the time of the Regency—her girlhood's dress, the inch of boddice and statuesque drapery of that moral period!

Aunt Theodosia stoutly maintained her position. She was determined to take me to Paris: it would be of immense advantage to me, she said. My mother was easily won over to the same opinion.

Aunt Theodosia is my dear father's sister; she has lived with us since his death, and is the recognised oracle of our house. Uncle Gilbert and Aunt Jane do not understand her in the least: they call her 'flighty.' Dear Aunt Theodosia is certainly rather high-flown and romantic in her ideas, and a little declamatory in her style of conversation,—there is a dash of the tripod and toga in all she says.

'Are you really in earnest, Doshia?' said my uncle. 'Do you mean to go trolloping about the country, like a couple of she Don Quixotes?'

'Very indecorous,' bleated Aunt Jane. 'Certainly not in accordance with my ideas of feminine propriety,' continued my uncle.

'Possibly not,' said my aunt, sarcastically. 'John Bull cripples his women after a different fashion to John Chinaman, but both have the same end in view—to keep them in slavish obedience at home. The pig-tailed Celestial induces his inferior animal to bend before the Jug-

german of fashion. The British bovine barbarian,' continued my aunt, delighted with the alliteration, 'fetters his with the manacles of womanly delicacy and conventional propriety. I am old enough now to break my chain, and my grey hairs are a sufficient protection for my niece, I should think.'

Aunt Jane smiled complacently. She wears what we north country people call a 'topping' of flaxen curls, and flatters herself, we believe, in the flimsy fiction.

'You would like this trip, Bessie?' said my mother.

I ventured to reply, that 'I should like it very much indeed.' I had held my peace throughout the discussion. I never speak much in the presence of Aunt Jane. She has sat upon me from my earliest childhood, impressed on my infant mind a painful sense of my personal insignificance, and hushed me to silence, with the oft-repeated cry that 'little girls should be seen and not heard.' I have left my girlhood behind me, but my claims to being audible, as well as visible, are no better recognised by her.

Uncle Gilbert waxed wrath.

'After the severe lesson you have had, Doshia, of the evils of foreign intercourse—it is of no use frowning and shaking your head, Maggie,' he said to my mother, 'I *will* revert to it. Do you wish your daughter to follow in the footsteps of her cousin Violette? Do you wish——'

My aunt burst into such a passion of tears, that Uncle Gilbert was silenced, and even slightly ashamed.

In our carefully swept and garnished household there is a blue chamber. The door is rarely opened. My uncle is invariably the porter on these occasions.

I have a faint recollection of a beautiful Frenchified child, who accompanied my aunt in her earlier visits. It is difficult to associate this lovely little being with the grim tenant of the closed room: but so it

is. My cousin Violette is the family skeleton. Her father, my Uncle Charles, was the head of the family. He married a French lady who did not long survive the birth of her little girl. My uncle lived principally abroad, but occasionally sent his little daughter, with her *bonne*, to stay with his sister, who became passionately attached to her. Years passed, the visits were discontinued. My uncle's health required a permanent residence in a warm climate: the society of his child was essential to him; he resisted my aunt's petitions to part with her even for a week. She grew up into beautiful womanhood. The father's letters were full of raptures about his daughter's beauty, her talent, and her accomplishments. Then came the black shadow. I never knew exactly what it was, I never cared to know. I knew there was a tale of shame and sin and sorrow. I knew there was a father's broken heart, and foul disgrace brought on an honest man. I have no charitable feelings towards my cousin Violette. The door of the blue chamber would never be opened by me.

My aunt's tears wrung a clumsy apology from my uncle: he offered no further opposition to the proposed trip. The motion was triumphantly carried. Our preparations were soon made. Aunt Jane assisted with the air of a martyr. She aspires to the crown of martyrdom; but I am certain the thorns will be carefully extracted before she places it on her head. She mouths and grimaces in her pilgrimage through life, but the peas in *her* shoes are boiled very soft indeed. Her limping is all make-believe.

My mother parted from us with many tears. She was very unhappy because my Aunt Theodosia would not consent to take a large lot of eatables across the Channel. French cookery is much distrusted in North Loomshire. We live in the faith of our forefathers. Frogs and snails are darkly suspected to lurk in Mossco's cuisine. My mother implored me, with tears in her eyes, on no account to touch the made-up dishes.

We were to travel in company with

a Belgian lady, a friend of les Demoiselles Desorme, at whose establishment my aunt had arranged to stay during our visit. The demoiselles lived a little out of Paris; they conducted an 'externat Protestant,' and received lady boarders during the holidays. We were introduced to our Flemish escort the day after our arrival in town. She was a pleasant, lively party, already in the autumn of her *seconde jeunesse*, on good terms with herself, and disposed to be equally so with the rest of the world. There was a good deal of her, a little too much I thought, but she said her plumpness was not detrimental because she was so *bien faite*. I did not myself consider she had much cause for self-gratulation on that score. Madame had decided on the Newhaven route. There was a fresh breeze blowing as we left the pier, which I did not altogether relish. My aunt got out her note-book. She commenced a flowery passage—suddenly she stopped. A sickly smile was on her lips, a greenish hue pervaded her face—she was in the grasp of the sea-monster! A sympathising steward guided her faltering steps down the cabin stairs. Madame had already disappeared into that den of misery. I remained on deck, where I was sufficiently ill myself to feel a malignant pleasure in the sufferings of all around me.

We neared Dieppe. I hastened to convey the news to the victims below. Every red velvet berth was tenanted by a mass of groans. My aunt suffered quietly; notso Madame. The Flemish woman was wonderful in her grotesque contortions. She tossed and tumbled in her berth; she groaned, she raved, she wept, she prayed. She appealed to all in the cabin: 'N'est ce pas que je suis la plus malade?' She would have quarrelled savagely with any one who had disputed her claims to pre-eminence in suffering. She tightly grasped the neck of the stewardess: (that much-enduring person showed me the marks of Madame's nails;) she was always unhappy in the proper arrangement of *la cuvette*. Some of the passengers were dining in the next cabin. She was furiously

enraged against them. 'Bah! les cochon Anglais vont manger de la viande, oui, absolument de la viande.' The very idea brought on a fresh paroxysm of her agony.

Madame was not a pleasant travelling companion. She sat opposite to me in the railway carriage, and went through a series of pantomimes, painfully suggestive of her past sufferings. Each moment I apprehended a tragedy—it was all acting—she ailed nothing. When we came in sight of Paris, she brightened up considerably. 'A friend of hers,' she said, with a simper, 'would meet us at the station.' The friend was there: we were introduced to him. Monsieur Félix *something*—I never knew his surname—I retain a most grateful recollection of Félix. He was devoted to Madame: they were affianced; she called him her *esclave*, and he was proud of the title. Thanks to Félix and the commercial treaty, the examination of our boxes was a mere form—in a few minutes they had received the white chalk-mark of approval. Félix hurried us off to a restaurant:—in spite of bewilderment, and fatigue, I was delighted with the gay room so brilliantly lighted. A *carte* was placed in my hands by an obsequious *garçon*. Hindostanee would have been as intelligible to me. I appealed to Félix; he catered for us. My aunt ate the contents of her *plat* in meek faith: it was a preparation of veal and white beans!—a wholesome supper for a weak digestion. Madame did not eat much; she enlivened the meal by recounting the incidents of the voyage with pre-Raphaelite elaboration of detail. Félix listened with the tenderest sympathy. Excellent Félix! how polite he was—how amiable, and, alas! how dirty! He adored the English, he said; he wore always the habits of England. There was only one habit he did not affect: Félix was on the merest bowing terms with soap and water. It was midnight when we reached the establishment of Demoiselles and Mrs. Desorme. Félix left us at the gate. He implored us to command his services—he would be delighted to

show us the wonders of Paris. There was some arrangement made between him and Madame. She whispered mysteriously, 'Il faut que je m'occupe tous les matins avec mes affaires.' It was not until some time afterwards, I knew what those affairs were. The demoiselles received me very kindly. We mounted the slippery stairs, and were shown our bedrooms. My aunt looked aghast, the apartments were so far removed from her English ideas of comfort.

Tired though I was, I could not sleep; there were many reasons for my wakefulness, reasons which took an amount of M. Vicat's powder to exterminate. My aunt was more fortunate: she slept well, and was in high spirits when we went down to breakfast. Mademoiselle Josephine Desorme did the honours; she was a very plain person. Someone has remarked that the Parisian face is a compound of the cat and ape. In mademoiselle's face the ape preponderated, but it was the reflex of an amiable ape. *Ma foi!* what a skin she had! Mademoiselle Lucie, her sister, was a degree better looking; she had very good hair, which she dragged from her face à la *Chinoise*. 'Je tâche seulement de me coiffer solidement,' she said; and certainly her coiffure was so *solide* she might have been tossed in a blanket without disarranging it. Two of the lady boarders were present, to whom we were introduced, Madame Anatole and her daughter, her *petite dernière*—a hideous, squinting dwarf. Madame was, I was told, more than seventy years of age. I never saw any one so well preserved. She was tall, and upright, and scorned the use of stays; her eyes had the fire of youth, her gray hair was plentiful, her large teeth white, strong, and perfectly entire. She was a Red Republican, who waded with retrospective delight in the bloody shambles of the first Revolution. She gloated over the agony of the aristocratic victims of the guillotine, and dilated on the sufferings of the unhappy Marie Antoinette with fierce delight. How cruelly contemptuous was she of our sympathetic horror. 'Ah!' she would cry,

'Citoyen Guillotine was a leveller magnifique, when he made to run the blood of the aristocrat, and the blood of the bourgeois. Was there any difference in the colour? N'est-ce pas qu'il était parfaitement de la même manne?' she snarled triumphantly. When excited, her eyes flashed, foam flew from her lips, and she purred like a vicious old cat. My aunt had a perfect horror of this woman. She had been a widow many years, and had lost all her children with the exception of her *petite dernière*, the miserable dwarf, who was the daily recipient of pleasant tokens of her mother's sweet temper. Of Monsieur Anatole, Madame rarely spoke; but from the little she said, I should say their domestic atmosphere had been very murky. Monsieur was safe from her vengeance now, lucky man! so she consoled herself with bitter vituperations against the sex in general. 'Take my advice, mademoiselle,' she said to me one day. 'Do not marry. All men are liars. We give them our young love, healthy, vigorous, strong: they give us—what? A rickety, puny liking, a crétin, the spawn of idleness and vanity. We nurse this feeble creature; we feed it with soft words and tender kisses. If we coax one sentient gleam from *cette misérable petite*, Dieu! are we not content? Our puny nursing dies in our arms. We weep, we bemoan; they who are the most imbecile, will try to animate the loathsome dead thing, will seek to galvanize it into convulsive twitchings. "Qu'elles sont sages, ces femmes-là."'

Ma *petite dernière* was, I think, the most light-hearted creature I have ever met. Cruelly cursed by nature, snubbed and savagely snarled at by her mother, she yet danced through life in the merriest manner possible. She took intense interest in all the details of the toilet, and was perpetually remodelling the fashion of her dresses.

There was another inmate of the *demoiselles'* establishment, who was an object of intense interest to the amiable Josephine, a little sickly, black-eyed girl, the only child of the Count and Countess St. Pierre.

It was by a mere accident Clémence was first placed under Mademoiselle Josephine's care; but her health had so much improved, her mother did not dare remove her. My aunt and the child were great friends; they sat together in the garden for hours. The *bonne*, in her high Normandy cap, attended, staring with her round eyes, and grinning with her wide mouth, at my aunt's quaint French. La Comtesse was passionately attached to her child; she had stayed for weeks together at the *demoiselles'* establishment,—a great condescension Josephine said. She was coming again shortly; her husband was very averse to it, but had yielded to her wishes. He was a proud, haughty man, devoted to his beautiful wife, but totally indifferent to his little girl, who, however, much resembled him. Mademoiselle was eloquent in praise of the beauty of the Comtesse, and even Madame Anatole, who detested aristocrats, admitted her loveliness. 'You have nothing equal to it in England,' she said.

CHAPTER II.

Madame Archambaud's 'affaires' certainly occupied a good deal of her time, but she did at length find leisure to attend to us. Félix was a most patient *valet de place*. Under his auspices we *did*, as Young England has it, the Louvre, the Luxembourg; we dragged through the labyrinth of paintings at Versailles, sauntered down its quaint walks, and strolled into the Trianon, that sophisticated Arcadia, where poor Marie Antoinette played the part of Phyllis with courtly Corydons. I wonder if the grave royal clockmaker took much interest in these pastoral games?

I was very fond of walking in the Bois de Boulogne. Parisian Madame is very great there. Dressed within an inch of her life, she haughtily surveys from her carriage the humble pedestrian. I like the appearance of Madame. I saw many faces which pleased me mightily—piquant faces, with bright eyes, clear skins, full lips, and pert little noses of no particular archi-

ture. I cannot speak so favourably of Parisian Monsieur:—he is an ill-looking animal; he is fat, stumpy, and badly put together; he has short, sunk features, and a sallow dirty skin. The hat he wears does not improve him. His hair cut close, after the fashion of the enforced coiffure of her Majesty's gaois, is not becoming. He shaves off his whiskers, and a livid, blue mark meanders over his fat cheeks. The nape of his neck is thick and red, and his closely-shaven head reveals it in all its hideousness. I do not like Parisian Mossoo: he is rude and ill-bred.

La politesse Française n'existe plus—it must have been one of the earliest victims of the Revolution. Monsieur lives on the reputation of his forefathers. He may have some polish, reserved exclusively for the drawing-room, but in real good breeding he cannot bear comparison with any of our Mr. Smiths. Monsieur, as you meet him in the streets, in the public promenades, railway carriages, and steamboats, is essentially a snob. He will push you from the trottoir, leer impertinently at you, puff the inevitable cigar in your face, and, horror of horrors, will *cracher*, with all its sickening antecedents, on the pavement at your feet. This last disgusting habit seems as natural to him as it is to his favourite *limaçon*.

The most polite men I met in Paris were the old priests; the young ones were surly enough, with a chained devil in their eye, not too pleasant to look at.

We always dined at a restaurant on those days devoted to sight-seeing. Madame liked this arrangement. She was fond of the good things of this life, and by no means approved of Mademoiselle Josephine's cuisine. At dinner, she would often send telegrams to me deprecatory of that amiable lady's *soupe maigre* and thin Bordeaux. Madame must have sorely tried the patience of honest Félix. I have seen her take his plat from him at the moment he was about to put a tempting morsel into his mouth; she would generously give him her own plat, which she did not like, in

exchange. Meek Félix under this provocation, only shrugged his shoulders, and said, with a smile, 'Que les jolies femmes sont capricieuses.'

Félix was violently enamoured. Félix was in easy circumstances. Madame Archambaud had cut her wisdom teeth many years; she could not plead extreme youth for the delay. Why did not this happy couple marry? An awkward obstacle existed—it presented itself in the unpleasant shape of the living husband of Madame! Let me hasten to deprecate all suspicions unworthy of her and her admirable *fiancé*. Legally she was a widow. In France, the door to marriage leaves all hope behind it. In Belgium the laws are not so binding: there, as in our own free land, an obliging Judge Ordinary unfetters the bonds of those upon whom the matrimonial yoke presses too heavily. Madame's experience of the happy state had indeed been most disastrous.

L'Arabe (so she called her ex-husband) was a domestic tyrant of the deepest dye. Compared with him, Quilp and Jonas Chuzzlewit were exemplary husbands. He had, she said, a '*mauvaise habitude de donner les coups de pied, les soufflets, &c.*' Also he removed her children from her. When they went into society, he was all smiling devotion and politeness, but he never lost an opportunity of coming close to her, and pinching her plump arms so terribly, that it was with difficulty she repressed her screams. He varied his torture occasionally, by shutting her up for days, with just enough of bread and water to sustain life. Besides these delicate attentions, he indulged in other *mauvaises habitudes* of so glaring and flagrant a description, that she had little difficulty in procuring a complete divorce. Again the question arises: a free woman, why did she hesitate to reward her patient adorer? L'Arabe would not disgorge her dot; he would not advance anything for the maintenance of his children. The lawyers had hitherto failed to compel this amiable specimen of a husband to pay Madame the income the law

awarded her. He seemed to be gifted with ubiquity. As the Irishman said, 'You looked, and there he was; you looked again, and there he wasn't.'

At last Madame's lawyers had induced him to appoint a meeting, when it was hoped they might come to some satisfactory arrangement. *Voilà les affaires*, which occupied her all the morning.

The first meeting with Monsieur took place in the demoiselles' salon. I passed him in the hall; a fat, tall, handsome man, who bowed to me with most deferential politeness. Madame, sustained by a glass of Bordeaux, was led into the room by the kind Josephine. I waited with some anxiety the result of this meeting. At the end of an hour she came to me, her face perfectly radiant. 'N'est-ce pas que c'est drôle,' she cried; 'l'Arabe est furieusement épris.' He wished to marry her again. I trembled for poor Félix, and ventured to say a word. She dispelled my alarm. She was not *une si grande bête* as again to trust herself to the tender mercies of Monsieur, but she fully enjoyed her position. An enamoured husband, an enamoured lover, l'Arabe et l'esclave alike kneeling suppliants at her feet. Whilst patient Félix was meekly toiling through heat and dust to point out objects worthy our attention, Madame was enjoying a delicious terror, lest we should come suddenly upon l'Arabe. 'If they meet,' she cried, with a sort of glee, 'they will put themselves to fight, *comme les deux coqs*.' Fortunately the encounter never took place. She dressed herself coquettishly to receive l'Arabe in the morning, and brought all the artillery of her charms to bear upon l'esclave in the afternoon. She was still very much afraid of her tyrant. He made an appointment to take her to Versailles. The day arrived. I was astonished to see her descend *en peignoir*, her hair dishevelled, and a woebegone expression on her face. She had not dared to refuse his invitation, so she got up an imaginary illness, and dressed for the situation. I am certain he suspected the ruse, but as both the demoiselles were

present when she received him, he was obliged to accept the fiction and take his leave. She told me afterwards she was convinced he had only invited her in order that he might pinch her.

Poor Madame! she offered a tempting surface for this little amusement. When I saw her torturing the faithful Félix with her capricious *exigence*, I caught myself wondering if she had tried that same little game upon l'Arabe, and if those *mauvaises habitudes* of his might not have been in part the harvest of those foolish seeds.

In spite of delay, in spite of l'Arabe, Félix was a happy man. He enjoyed the present. How gaily he strutted along, his white hat on one side, his short blue coat tightly buttoned across his chest, his trousers of the loudest pattern, a sporting pin in his cravat, an umbrella in his hand! He was proud of the few words of English he knew, and which he spoke with a most villainous accent. His parting words to me were always the same. 'Good-bye, mees; God bless you; have good appetite!'

The devotion of this amiable Fleming to the manners and customs of England was sometimes provoking. He dragged me one day through that gloomy wilderness, Père la Chaise, for more than an hour, in search of a tomb, upon which he had written his name, years ago. His triumph was great when he found it. Our wanderings led us to the burial-ground of little children. Wooden crosses mark the resting-place of these innocents. There was a small coffin about to be lowered whilst we were there. The poor mother knelt in mute agony at the grave. I felt unwilling to intrude on her sorrow. Madame would stay. She enjoyed the spectacle; she sobbed, and blew her nose with intense pathos. She was disgusted with my apathy. 'Que vous avez le cœur dur, mademoiselle; moi, je suis si sensible.' This passion for babies is great amongst Frenchwomen. There is a married sister of the demoiselles, who has a baby, which she brings to their establishment. All the women bend

their knee to this young tyrant. Its various eccentricities are met with shouts of approval. Even Madame Anatole melts into womanly tenderness when this infant is on her knees.

Mademoiselle Josephine came to me one day in a state of great excitement. The countess was coming; she would be here directly; she would appear at dinner! Poor mademoiselle was quite hot and red; she had made some change in her *cuisine* when this haughty lady graced her table before. Mademoiselle was rather too fond of serving us with homely dishes. There was one, I remember, we had sometimes — *le foie du cochon*. I shuddered to think it might be one of the plats of to-day.

It is rarely anyone comes up to the standard of highly-wrought expectation. The countess far surpassed mine. She was the most beautiful creature I have ever seen. Tall, and magnificently formed, fair as alabaster, straight Grecian features, violet eyes, superbly lashed, luxuriant rich brown hair—from the crown of her head to the sole of her foot, she was perfect. Aunt Theodosia is such an admirer of beauty, she was quite mesmerised by this lovely creature.

Monsieur, her husband, escorted her, and remained some little time in the salon. He was the best-looking Frenchman I had yet seen; taller and better built than ordinary Mossoo. His features were straight, and though his hair was hideously cropped, the head itself was well poised. He was haughtily polite, but his politeness evidently sprang from a sense of what was due from himself rather than what was due to us. He was devoted to his wife, but he scarcely looked at his little girl. The poor child clung to her mother, who smothered her with caresses.

It was all very fine dining every day with a live countess. The diners were better, but I must confess those social gatherings were infinitely more pleasant before the advent of this noble lady. The light merry chat of the amiable demoiselles was hushed, Madame Archambaud was dumb. Madame Anatole,

with true republican spirit, asserted her independence and equality by overbearing insolence. The countess was haughtily reserved; we rarely saw her, excepting at dinner. She passed the mornings in her own room, with her child. She unbent the most with my aunt. She was, perhaps, grateful for the dear soul's kindness to the little Clémence. She listened patiently as my poor aunt floundered amongst the French idioms. She occasionally lifted her out of the slough. The count was the most attentive of husbands. Every day he called to see his wife. He brought her beautiful bouquets; he loaded her with presents; he was devoted as the callowest of boy lovers. I drew Madame Anatole's attention to this fact. I cited it in refutation of her tirades on the fickleness of men. The count must have been married some years. The countess was secure of his affection, I said.

'Secure,' cried this old infidel, 'as the shifting sand, as the treacherous wave! She sleeps in the paradise of fools. Josephine was secure of Napoleon! When your royal porker's kisses were warm on Anne Boleyn's lips, where was the glittering axe? Ah! And those gay flutterers, Mesdames La Valière, Montespan, and La Fontargès, they died beloved by their grand monarch, not in the cold convent cell, with its stripes, aves, and paternosters! Bah!'

She was a terrible old paganness, Madame Anatole.

CHAPTER III.

Our next door neighbour was an ex-danseuse of the Royal Opera. France is kinder than England to these poor worn-out dancing hacks. In their old age they are turned out to grass in comfortable pasturage. Mademoiselle Coryphée was evidently in easy circumstances. Her antecedents were, I am afraid, more than equivocal; but whatever her past life might have been, she was rabidly anxious that the shadow of respectability should fall on her declining years. She strove for the slightest sign of recognition from the demoiselles. They were inexorable.

Overtures, in the shape of grapes and pears from her garden, were sternly repulsed; not the ghost of a bow met the humble and lowly reverence she persisted in making. I was weak enough to feel rather sorry for her, though I admit the demoiselles could not very well have acted differently. The possible *institutrices* of *les jeunes demoiselles Anglaises*, to be on the faintest bowing terms with one under a social taboo! It was impossible.

A bower of roses was the only separation between the garden of the demoiselles and that of their unworthy neighbour. This was a frequent source of annoyance to the amiable Josephine.

It was a hot, drowsy afternoon. Little Clémence was in the garden with her *bonne*. Madame la Comtesse was occupied with some embroidery. She had so placed herself that she could see every movement of her child. Suddenly I saw her colour heighten. She rose hastily, and ran down the steps leading to the garden. I followed her with my eyes. Little Clémence was in the arms of the ex-danseuse! She was complacently eating *bons-bons*, given to her by mademoiselle. The countess rushed towards them, and dragged the child somewhat roughly away. I could not hear what she said, nor the answer she received; but I saw a viperish glitter in mademoiselle's eyes. She had hitherto borne every repulse so meekly, I could not account for her resentment on this occasion. The complexion of the countess was a good deal brighter when she returned to the salon. She rebuked the *bonne* very severely, and left the room with the child in her arms. Her departure was the signal for a very loud chorus from the Frenchwomen. They could scarcely find words to express their indignation at the impertinence of the danseuse. So bitter, indeed, were they, that my aunt was moved to speak a few words in defence of the poor sinner. She even ventured to inculcate a little Christian doctrine, and suggested that it would be as well to mingle a modicum of pity with our censure.

'Ah, madame! what fine sentiments!' snarled Madame Anatole. 'Mais oui, we should be gentle and pitiful to these poor lost ones. *Pauvre Perdita!* how miserable she is. She dresses in silks and feathers, and fares sumptuously. Cruel Diane! toiling through the dust, bestow your blessing on this unhappy one! She may have robbed you of your lover's heart, or weaned from you your husband's love. *Ce n'est rien, quoi!* you prized that feeble flower, that sickly tree was dear to you, and Perdita's breath has blighted every leaf and bud of promise. *Ma chère Diane*, be a good Christian, pity *cette belle pécheresse*. Hélas! pour moi, I am not a good Christian. Ah!' she continued, with a fierce purr, '*charmantes Perdidas!* would you had but one head, and would that head were here par terre, I would put my foot upon *cette belle bête*, and crush it with less remorse than I would tread out the life of a crawling worm.'

A day or two passed, unmarked by any incident. The allotted period for our stay in France was drawing to a close. It was evening; my aunt was writing in her room; Madame la Comtesse dressing for the opera; the amiable demoiselles, busy as usual, remodelling dresses; and I was playing picquet with the Red Republican.

The *bonne* entered with a note for Mademoiselle Josephine. Before she had finished reading it she had exhausted almost every interjection in the French language. Her face was a ghastly yellow. She concluded with an emphatic '*Mon Dieu! mais c'est impossible!*' She handed the note to her sister—its effect on the demoiselle with the *solide coiffure* was equally powerful. Our curiosity was greatly excited. French women are not remarkable for reticence. We were immediately taken into Mademoiselle's confidence.

The note was from the ex-danseuse. It was written in a bitterly ironical style. It commenced with an elaborate apology for intruding her unworthy self on so pure a demoiselle. Was virtuous mademoiselle acquainted with the antecedents of all the charming ladies

she received into her establishment? Above all, did she know anything of the past life of the beautiful comtesse? Mademoiselle Coryphée had much pleasure in informing her of a few particulars. In the first place, the soi-disant comte held a higher title; secondly, madame was not his wife—he was already married! Mademoiselle C. was in a situation to furnish Mademoiselle J. with convincing proofs of the truth of her assertion.

I never heard such a noise as followed the reading of the note. A howl of triumph from Madame Anatole (I knew she always hated the beautiful aristocrat) was followed by a shrill demand that mademoiselle should insist on the immediate departure of *cette femme infâme* and her miserable petite. To this there was not a dissenting voice; even the squinting dwarf protested she could not breathe the atmosphere polluted by the presence of this *créature abominable*.

Poor Mademoiselle Josephine! This countess had been one of her great triumphs. She had hoped permanently to retain the little Clémence. All her air-built castles were destroyed. She was, too, of a kind, womanly nature—the task imposed was most repugnant to her. I dreaded the coming meeting. I cannot bear to see a haughty creature humiliated. I pity the poor spaniel crouching under the lash, but it is more than pity I feel to see the chained leopardess compelled to endure the degradation of blows.

Like a coward, I was about to shrink quietly from the room: I had not time. My aunt, the countess, and the count entered at that moment. There are some scenes which photograph themselves on the brain. That group I shall never forget. The countess looked superb, her natural loveliness enhanced by a perfect toilette; she wore a dress of fleecy black tulle, which admirably contrasted with the milky whiteness of her complexion. Monsieur was haughtily polite as usual. He addressed a few civil words to Mademoiselle Josephine. He feared the opera would not conclude before

midnight. 'Would mademoiselle,' he inquired, with a smile, 'object to receive his wife into her well-ordered establishment at so late an hour?'

There was a dead silence.

Fierce looks from the Red Republican and the dwarf, her daughter, impelled poor Josephine to the performance of her unwelcome task.

She commenced with a stammering apology. She had received an unpleasant communication: it had a reference to Madame la Comtesse. Mademoiselle hoped, nay, she was persuaded, Madame would be able to give the scandal the lie.

The countess took the note. Her face became perfectly livid. The hope I had indulged in, that the accusation might perhaps be false, died out at sight of those convulsed and bloodless lips. Monsieur was scarcely less agitated.

'Est-ce vrai?' shrieked Madame Anatole.

No answer.

It was then the flood-gates of their wrath burst open, and abuse poured like a torrent on the criminals. Every tongue found choice epithets with which to deluge the lovely sinner. She stood like a beautiful wild animal brought suddenly to bay. The insults of the vixenish Frenchwomen stung her into action. She turned defiantly towards them. They continued wildly to declaim.

'Silence, canaille!' thundered Monsieur. 'Courage, ma bien chérie. You have too long honoured such miserable bourgeois with your lovely presence. Allons! We will leave this detestable hole at once.'

With an air of contemptuous insouciance he drew a cigar from his case, and lit the weed in the sacred salon.

Madame Anatole's rage then knew no bounds. She made as though she would rush upon the aristocrats, and rend them with her hands. I was sick and faint. The scene had quite overpowered me. I turned to leave the room.

I was arrested by piercing shrieks from the Frenchwomen, a cry like the howl of a wild beast from the count.

Great God! The room was dim with smoke. The countess was a sheet of flame!

The unhappy man, in his excitement, had thrown the lighted paper with which he had kindled his cigar, all a-blaze, upon her dress.

All that I have detailed occurred so rapidly, and I had been so interested in watching the principal actors in the scene, I had not observed my aunt.

God grant I never again see such dumb despair, such concentrated misery, as met my eyes when I looked at her in this moment of horror.

Was I awake, or dreaming?

From out that burning mass came words, even in their shrill agony, pure in English accent, 'Aunt Theodosia! Save, oh save me!'

With wild entreaties to me to keep away, my aunt rushed towards her. The count was striving with his bare hands to put out the cruel flames. My aunt wore a dress of velvet. She enclosed the burning sufferer in her arms. She looked with frantic dismay about the room. Alas! there was nothing to hope for in the bare uncarpeted floor, the muslin-festooned windows. The Frenchwomen had run shrieking from the room. I felt suffocated; my head swam; for the first time in my life I fainted.

When consciousness returned, I found myself lying on my bed. Madame Archambaud was with me. She was crying bitterly. She had a kind heart in spite of her selfishness. In answer to my questions, she told me the poor lady was in the next room. She was frightfully burnt. Monsieur had rushed like one distracted for the doctor. My aunt was with her.

'This Comtesse. Was she' (I saw Madame was bursting with curiosity) 'was she indeed the cousin of Mademoiselle?' She understood a little English, and had rightly interpreted the words which came from that burning mass.

It was not a time for covering deformity with conventional garments—not a time for whitened sepulchres and gilded lies. Death, in its worst form, was hovering

over this beautiful sinner. Worldly shame was absorbed in overwhelming pity. I said she was indeed my cousin.

There was a noise of angry voices below. Madame went to inquire the cause of this tumult. She returned in a few moments, her face purple with indignation.

'The wicked women! the cruel hearts!' she cried. 'They insist that the poor lady be instantly removed. And that horrid old woman Madame Anatole has woke up the little Clémence to tell her that her mother is a bad woman, and has been burnt for her wickedness!'

Such a statement would have fired an angel. I got up at once. Passion gave me strength. I went first to Mademoiselle Josephine. She was not difficult to manage. It was easy to see she was only the unwilling agent of others. 'Madame Anatole,' she murmured. 'Leave her to me,' I said. My energy carried all before me. I threw myself upon the Red Republican. I did not think my French would have served me so well. I lashed her savagely with my tongue. Every word must have left a mark. The old woman was dumb from suppressed rage. I did not wait until she had regained her speech—I did not wait for her ill-omened purr. My next thought was the little Clémence. The poor child was in an agony of grief. She cried perpetually for her mamma, her beautiful mamma. I took her in my arms. I comforted her as best I could. I told her she should see her mamma. I exhausted all my art to soothe her. She became more calm, and then I left her with her *bonne*. I went to the sick-room. I dreaded entering it. I dreaded the sight I must see. My aunt met me at the door: she looked ten years older. The room was darkened—not so dark but that I saw, extended on the bed, the total wreck of what an hour ago was beautiful. The doctor was there; he could give no hope. We could scarcely desire it. 'She will not suffer long,' he said. Monsieur stood by the bed. The first agony of his grief was over. He appeared to me

a little too eagerly anxious about his own burnt hands. It was evident he could not associate that blistered, red, disfigured face with the lovely being he had so wildly worshipped. There was almost a look of disgust in his eyes when they were turned towards the sufferer. I saw it, and I despised him for it. Did she see it too? God help her! I think she did. She was quite calm. She wished to be alone with Aunt Theodosia, and then to see her child. Monsieur got up a tableau at this. 'Did his beloved angel wish him to leave her?' &c., &c.; but I saw he was by no means sorry to go. Honest Félix was worth a million such as he!

She died the next day. My aunt was with her to the last. She closed those poor eyes; she poured balm into that fleeting soul.

Enclosed in a magnificent coffin, the body was removed by Monsieur's orders to his hotel. We left the house an hour afterwards: it was impossible to remain under the same roof with Madame Anatole. We took the little Clémence and her *bonne* with us. Mademoiselle Josephine offered no opposition: she rejoiced at our departure. It was an exodus of lepers.

Kind Félix had engaged apartments for us in a street near the Madeleine. Thither we removed. My aunt and the child were so prostrated by their grief it required all my efforts to sustain them. After the funeral my aunt wrote to Monsieur, appointing a meeting. He came, clad in the severest *sables*, his features arranged to suit his dress. He was acting the rôle of the disconsolate lover. He made the most of his burnt hands: they were but slightly injured, but he

carried one in a sling. I explained to him my aunt's wishes with regard to Clémence: he eagerly closed with her proposal to adopt the child. He made some liberal offers about money, but these were sternly refused. Clémence was to go with us to England. My aunt would provide for her. She was never to know the secret of her mother's shame. Monsieur winced a little at this, but he soon rallied.

'Did he wish to see his child?' I asked. 'There was no occasion,' he said; 'it would be better not.' With all his hypocrisy he did not attempt to play the part of the fond father. He was a contemptible creature, this count—a miserable counterfeit—rags and sawdust tricked out with fair seemings. We never saw him again.

Madame Archambaud came to bid us good-bye. She was in high spirits, and wore a resplendent bonnet. She was about to start for Belgium. L'Arabe had insisted on escorting her to the station. L'esclave would follow by the afternoon train.

We left France as soon as my aunt and the child were fit to travel. We returned to England *viâ* Boulogne. The steamer was crowded with Englishmen: it refreshed me to see the fine figures, well-poised heads, and straight features of my tawny-bearded countrymen.

Little Clémence flourishes in the pure air of North Loomshire. She is the pet of our household. Uncle Gilbert and Aunt Jane *think* a great deal, no doubt, but they say nothing. They dare not allude to the blue chamber—the door is hermetically closed. The family secret sleeps beneath a costly mausoleum across the Channel.

T. K.



MY COLLEAGUES IN THE OFFICE.

I WAS for ten years a clerk in the — Department of the public service—civil service as we liked it to be called—and I look back to the time with favour, as one that included some of the most quietly comfortable days I have ever spent. 'There is no greater grief than to be mindful, in trouble, of happiness that is gone for ever,' said Francesca to Dante, when she spoke to him in the second circle of the *Inferno*; and so I, placed since the resignation of my clerkship, amidst cares and excitements, which, if more money-bringing than my old employment, are incomparably more wearing, look back from the troubled waters in which I struggle, to the placid calm in which I once lay at ease.

At the time I entered Somerset House I was a mere lad, something under seventeen years; but the fact that I was to receive 90*l.* for the first year's service made me feel like one of much larger growth. I have yet amongst the few letters which I keep as sacred, one from my kind old uncle who had busied himself to get me the berth, in which he congratulates me on being, at my then age, 'independent, and an esquire to boot.' This second cause for rejoicing was a great matter. The thermometer of my vanity went suddenly up to the highest point on the index; and my kinsfolk and acquaintance were, no doubt, immensely amused, as they saw me strut, walk stiffly, and go like Agag, delicately, in my new character.

I have since had reason to know that procuring the appointment as my good uncle did, had been a work of trouble, though he ever regarded it as a labour of love. There had been much begging and soliciting, much going about from this member to that minister, much that was not congenial to a proud man, to be done before the concession was granted. My uncle had served long and faithfully, and had earned the friendship of many people worth knowing; but he had at this time been twelve years on

the retired list; and in order to do me the service he desired, it behoved him to address men who had taken office when he was thinking of leaving it, men who did not know him—to drag his own services and merits into the light—to him a truly hateful task—and to solicit as a favour that which the powers of a few years back would have conceded as a right.

The request was granted, however, and I 'joined' as soon as the official letter came, announcing my appointment. Those were days before the Civil Service Commissioners were set to work, when a bit of patronage was something really worth bestowing, not being clogged with the drawbacks of an inquisition into one's 'accomplishments.' To be sure there was a sort of inquiry into what we could do, akin to that which frightened their senses out of candidates for the naval service before the foundation of the Naval College. The sucking admirals were bound to answer questions as to their age, the influence through which they had been nominated, and their capability of spelling cro'-j'k yard (cross-jack yard). I was questioned by the head of the department—or rather, as I remember, by the chief clerk—upon the first two points, and in lieu of the third, which might be deemed foreign to my duty, I was asked if I could read and write; and, answering in the affirmative, was admitted to benefit of clergy without being put to proof. The examination was slight, certainly, but perhaps all that was warranted by the nature of the work I had to perform. The fact that Sir Charles — had given me the appointment was guarantee sufficient for my breeding and social status; and the educational test by which I was tried (?) was, as I now think, ample to insure an efficient person to do the work which was allotted to me. I have nothing to say against the high commission which now selects the public servants from a given number of nominees. Its creation may be a

necessary concession to the greater general knowledge which boys now-a-days are said to possess. It may be right to make sharpness, in answering questions on several branches of knowledge, the criterion to which all aspirants to public employment should be brought. All I have to observe is, that an inferior order of men, that is to say inferior in point of manners and social standing, is let into the public service than used to be the case, and that my experience convinces me this great sharpness in the management of examination papers, is not shown to advantage in the copying of letters or the casting up of totals. Perhaps the public service does not suffer directly in consequence of the first; but I fancy it is a loser by the second, which is said to be its gain. The vanquisher of several competitors in a struggle for a place, is apt, by virtue or vice of his victory, to think himself qualified for higher things than those he is set to work on; to become dissatisfied because his powers are not recognized and rewarded with higher place and higher pay; and to make the interests of the service subserve his own whilst he looks out for some other employment where he fancies he will shine more brilliantly. This at least is the suggestion of my experience—perhaps of my prejudice—on which latter ground I will say nothing further on the subject.

The head of my department, Sir Thomas Dod, was a man whose style and manner were of the proper official type. Dignified, but not supercilious, firm and deliberate of speech, decided but courteous in action, he was much respected by the members of the Board, and had a great influence over them, which he used beneficently for the good of those under him. He had invented a machine for improving the means of cooking aboard ship; had suggested some alterations in the construction of life-buoys; and was introducer, if not inventor, of a certain kind of fuel by which small coal could be utilized, and stowage could be saved in coal bunks. He was, besides, an excellent administrator; altogether a most fit man

for his place, and a very valuable public servant. His government of the department was equal, and generally respected. He earned and had the honour due to those who do thoroughly whatsoever their hands find to do—those who go upon the time-approved principle of 'sweating for duty, not for hire.' We were all much pleased, as at an honour done to ourselves, when the riband of the Bath was given to him on his retirement after fifty years of service: we were all sorry, as men who love a friend, when we heard that he was dead.

I well remember the day on which I first 'joined.' After the exertations under the chief clerk, of which I have already spoken, and which, including the two hours I had to wait before the chief clerk could attend to me, brought the day to the fag end of morning; the clerk to whose branch I was remitted for duty, told me there was no need to begin work that day, and bidding me attend at the office by ten next morning, sent me away for the rest of the afternoon.

A strange sort of fortune has waited on me from my birth. Dividing the events of life into three classes, major, minor, and minim, my fortune has always favoured me in the few which rank under the first, and has invariably crossed me in respect of the many in the last two. I am unlucky in trifles—the small matters which, if they go wrong, are more difficult to endure than greater troubles. I happen to go out just before some one I am most anxious to see, calls upon me. People upon whose arrangements I have made mine depend, deceive me. If there be an error in a time table, I am he, who, relying upon the table, arrives at the station only to learn that the train I meant to use has been discontinued.

Now, whereas my getting the appointment in the — Department was apparently one of the great events of my life, fortune favoured me in obtaining it; but having done that, she seems to have thought her duty done, and to have allowed me to fall easily under the yoke of 'minor' and 'minim.' Thus I found

in 'joining,' that the vacancy I was appointed to fill was the last of a number which had been made by the superannuation of all the oldsters in the office. There was a superabundance of young blood. In my own class there were many men my seniors in the service who were my juniors in age. In the class above there was not a single gray hair, and there was but one man in it upon whom the badge of Elisha had been placed—and that, not through age, for the man had lost his hair when ill with a fever. Not one of the clerks of the first class had touched his fortieth year. The chief clerk had but reached his fiftieth; and to add to the drawback made by all this youthfulness, there was scarce a man among the whole set who was not hale and strong, and as likely to live to take promotion when it should come, as he was certain to growl and grumble until it actually came. It was a bad look out for the juniors.

How many times have we calculated the chances of life in those honest fellows with whom we were daily thrown! With what mixed feelings of regret we heard of the dangerous illness of M——! What a wicked scanning was there of the certificates of illness sent in from time to time by M——'s physicians! Was there not a spice of hypocrisy about the words of welcome with which M—— (he was high up in the second class) was received back after his eight months' bout of sickness? Was there not a falling off from the estimation in which we all had holden him? Did we not in our heart of hearts look upon him as a deceiver—one who had done us a very considerable wrong? Had he not given rise to thoughts of which we ourselves were perhaps hardly conscious? Were not our intents rather 'wicked than charitable?' and had not his return revealed these thoughts to us in all their naked naughtiness—shown us of what 'coarse metal we were moulded'?

Was there not a feeling almost of satisfaction, a sort of complacent mental undercurrent partaking of the unhallowed, when we heard of W——'s death? We had liked the

man—been ever well with him, and were truly grieved at his sudden removal; but our grief was for the man, not the clerk. We mourned our friend, we *could* not regret the vacancy.

Surely M. de Rochefoucauld must have had such as we in his mind's eye when he decided to write down that libellous maxim of his, that 'There is something in the misfortunes of our greatest friends which is not displeasing to us.'

But my duty in the department. Alas! how different from what I had expected. Not mine to move the slightest wheel in the huge machine with which the — department did its business; not mine to suggest, or to receive confidences; not mine to thread the labyrinth of the official mind, or to assist in the preparation of those Themistes—those simple but awful decrees—which carried dismay into the bosoms of contractors, at the same time that they persuaded them of our unbusinesslike ways. It was not for me to write even the most unimportant minutes, nor to compose the letters which had to be written upon them. During the whole ten years of my service I attained not to the dignity of official letter writing.

Smile not, reader, at the use of this word 'dignity.' Let me tell you it is no mean art which enables a man to wag his official pen with grace; to know exactly in what key to pitch the departmental pipe; to snub without being coarse; to be honied without being servile; to be insolent without being vulgar. No 'prentice hand could, with the contents of a letter, convey a sense of the relation existing between writer and correspondent, so as to impress the latter withal, and yet not bluntly inform him of it. What skill is not wanted to perceive the occasion which warrants the assurance of 'having the honour to be' instead of simply 'being,' the servant of a man. As far as incivility is removed from obsequiousness, so far is the distance between 'I have to acquaint you,' and 'I have the honour to request you will be pleased to move.' There are signs

of dudgeon about the former, proofs of 'I *must* do it, though against my will,' which are conspicuously absent in the latter. The one is played on the E chord of arrogance, the other on the very 'bass string of humility.' A man to whom the one greeting came, could not in his wildest dreams hope ever to be allowed within arm's length; the receiver of the other might suppose in the sender a desire to be permitted to lick his hand. The first was used in writing to contractors, and the others whom the — Department presupposed to be sailors round it. The second was employed in letters to high public officers, got at by means of their deputies or joint secretaries. Between the two lay an intermediate form, saying that our chief 'begged to acquaint.' This was used for letters to those whose rank might be considered equal to that of the head of our department. Last and least was a form as unceremonious as a writ, in which 'John Jones was informed,' without anything to soften the way for the information.

Thus much on the art of official letter-writing. More might be said on the score of broad margins; printed directions to correspondents how to write letters back again; the arbitrary use of capital letters; the mysteries of the envelopes, and the franking of the same; but space will not admit of it.

Imagine to yourself, reader, an elegant hand-press—having on one side a printer's ink pad, on the other an India rubber cushion. Between the two was a moveable stamper, working from one to the other by being raised and then depressed by the hand. In the stamper was an engraved seal, bearing the name and arms of our department. By pressing this on to the printing-pad the die became inked, and by bringing the die over on to a paper lying on the cushion opposite, an impression of the seal was obtained. This impression was recognized by the Post Office, and allowed of our letters passing without charge. For obvious reasons it was considered desirable that this stamp should not be exposed for common use.

A clerk was therefore appointed to take charge of it, and his duty it was to pass and re-pass the stamp between the printing-pad and the letters to be franked. That duty, reader, was mine. For the space of four years a twist of my hand bade the letters of the — Department go free. After that time I was admitted into the ranks of the copiers, and there I continued till the day I quitted the service. For me promotion came not from the east, nor from the west, nor from any other point of the compass. I waited till tired of waiting, and then committed myself, in the hope of better things, to the waters of life in which I have since swum.

D— was an expert in the art of letter-writing. He had charge of the correspondence division, which no one could have managed better. His the tact and discrimination which I have spoken of as essential: his the disposition to give all the honour to whom it was strictly due, but not to bestow it superfluously upon any one. Who but he knew the exact qualities of different knighthoods, the nice degrees of dignity, and the relative importance of authorities? His style was forcible and perspicuous. He quickly grasped, and as soon expressed, an idea. He did well as a clerk, but because it was his duty, not because he liked the work. D—'s ancestors had been of the English gentry ever since such a class existed. They had most of them served in the army, and as he sometimes said in half apology for himself, he was the first of the family for five generations who had not carried a sword. His predilections were thoroughly military—he hated the confinement and irksomeness of an office, and would I believe, but for his amiable wife and bairn, have shown his indentures a fair pair of heels. He raised the first company of Volunteers the office afforded, and delighted in the drilling of his men of war far more than in the movements of his pen. He was to the backbone a gentleman, incapable of a mean trick, and this checked to proper bounds the tendency of his disposition which led

him to introduce the *discipline militar* into the duties of civil office.

I remember he had a morbid hatred for Jews: he would have no dealings with them on his own account, and could scarcely reconcile his conscience with his duty, which required him not unfrequently to write letters to the children of Israel. He was a strict Conservative, and always spoke ill of Cromwell, giving you to understand, at the same time, that his family had lost much property in consequence of the civil troubles. He was a good hater, and a trustworthy friend. Many liked him, and some did not. I was glad to hear the other day that he had been promoted to the first-class section.

K—— was a merry little Irishman, with fair hair and blue eyes; a very dragon for work when he was in the humour for it, but with an unhappy faculty of doing the work all wrong. He had to keep letters addressed to the department after they had been done with. Under his care the letters remained till wanted for reference, and sometimes even after that, for often they were not forthcoming from the carefully tied-up bundles in which he had stowed them away. They were here, or they were there, or they were nowhere; K—— was often at fault about them. Not so, however, about the comparative qualities of dogs, or the merits of breech-loading guns. On both these topics he was perfectly at home, and could talk by the hour about the points of a horse. His accounts of 'moving accidents by flood and field' bordered strangely on the marvellous, but they were none the worse for that. In his dress he affected the sportsman. I remember one winter he came back from 'leave,' bringing with him a portrait of himself in hunting costume, donned, as we used to tell him, for a poor ten days in the year. All of us liked the man for his good-humour and genuineness. When last I called upon him, he was still at his Record Office, tying up fresh accretions of public business.

How pleasant a thing it is to speak of a man about whom one has not a single unpleasant recollection! Such a pleasure I experience when I think

of P——. He was in many ways a strange fellow, with habits eccentric, some perhaps grotesque, yet also so far out of the common as to be untainted by a suspicion of impurity or vice. Nature had not favoured him by giving him personal beauty, and he did not strive to make his body amends by the assistance of tailors or cunning workmen. His limbs were heavy, and moved awkwardly, a defect increased by lameness, resulting from an illness which nearly cost him his life. He was far from possessing the *bel air*, and would have been gazed at through many eyeglasses had he ventured to frequent the fashionable walks of the citizens. He invariably wore a black suit, made of second quality cloth, hard, rough boots, and a hat which was the wonder of the office. Had you, who did not know him, met him in the street, you would have failed altogether to guess his occupation from his appearance. He had not the port or look of a man of business; was the last man that could be taken for a doctor or a lawyer; and had not the air of unhurriedness and insouciance which marks the government clerk. You could not have taken him for a mechanic, if you had seen his face, which was a very noticeable one — thoughtful even to anxiousness, nervous, and bearing on a somewhat rough outside unmistakeable signs of the gentle spirit within. He was, without exception, the most gentlemanly man I ever met. With a large stock of good sense, he had a lofty romanticism about him very beautiful to see. It never led him into extravagance, while it urged him to use his strong practical faculties in the doing of much that often goes hurtfully undone. He had a clear perception of the small wants incidental to his fellows. He knew all the depths and shoals of delicate positions, and loved to throw his timely help to any swimmer in the troubled waters. He was specially unselfish, and, what is greater praise, was never driven to desist from good works by the selfishness of those to whom he was unselfish.

There was scarce a man in the

office who had not freely used P——'s purse when money pressure suggested a loan. Everyone was his debtor for services rendered, and I, for one, am glad of an opportunity to acknowledge my obligation, though he is never likely to call me to an account. When I left the — Department, he was thirty-eight years of age, but not married. He kept house for his four sisters, and, in lieu of children of his own, adopted those of all his many friends. Many a small heart has he rejoiced by his welcome presence and well-appreciated gifts. Many a widow and distressed spinster has had cause to bless his name. Not that he could afford them large relief, for his income was a very moderate one; but he divined peculiar wants, which so often go unheeded, and, by the judiciousness of his help, contrived to make 5l. go the length of 10l.

What though he were given to stick by precedent, and prone to be precise? My Lord Chief Justice could not more entirely have exhausted a case in which half a province might be at stake, than P—— would conscientiously sift a matter which involved no more than the value of a hundred weight of biscuit. The service had no abler servant, and few social circles are favoured with P——'s equal.

R——, on the strength of five articles inserted in a magazine, which forbore to pay him for them, set up as the literary character in the office. Questions arising on the composition and grammar of the office letters were considered to be of right referred to him. His was the opinion which decided the point when the propriety of using debatable expressions was in issue. I never could understand what claim he had to this post of arbiter. He was not happy at composing; had an ungainly and laboured style; and was singularly gifted with the power of selecting infelicitous expressions. He prided himself on his almost exclusive use of words of Saxon origin, and spoke lightly of Dr. Johnson for being the champion of a Latinized vocabulary. He was constantly scribbling on bits of

the office paper, and using the office hours for his 'literary work,' which he cast upon the waters of the magazine sea, and, with the exception of the five articles above mentioned, found it again after many days, a little the worse at the edges for having been passed through many editorial hands. He affected the supposed conventional dress of a man of letters, and was, as J—— said one day, in allusion to his untidy habits, in both senses a *littérateur* (litterer)—a horrid pun, for which J—— was fined two bottles of pale ale.

He presumed a good deal on the strength of his position, was 'surly with servants,' and certainly distant with his kinsmen in the office. We were tolerated by him, no more; and out of consideration for this kindness, he allowed us to do the work which his devotion to letters caused him to leave undone. We none of us questioned his customs in a serious way. We were rather pleased than otherwise that the office should have the reputation of being literary. We let him be Sir Oracle, and when he spoke no dog dared to bark. But we did not like him, and were very glad when the office of Deputy Assistant Commissary General at Tomato became vacant, and was offered to and accepted by him.

There were points, however, about R—— which were very respectable, and which I have since learned to appreciate. He lived a pure life, and was kind to his family, who were not well off. He did much negative good by simply not doing harm; and his acts of positive merit were not so few as I at one time imagined. His temper had been damaged by bitter disappointment connected with his first and only love. I believe he took to writing in the hopes of lessening the distance between his love and him, for want of means was the bar to their marriage. That he did not succeed in this attempt was another sore trial. At this distance of time I can certainly think of him, when I regret, as all have daily occasion to regret, that

'All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.'

R. L.

THE MERCHANT PRINCES OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER VII.

GEORGE HERIOT, OF EDINBURGH.

ABOUT the commercial history of Scotland, prior to the union of its government with that of England under the House of Stuart, very scanty information has come down to us. From the time of David I. there had been a steady growth of trade and manufacture in all the more important southern and eastern parts of the kingdom. Foreign merchants had been invited to come to Scotland, and native adventurers had been encouraged to visit the important trading towns of the Continent. Through nearly four centuries wools, raw and wrought, hides and fish had been regularly conveyed for sale to Flanders. The Scotchmen had brought back various articles of diet, wine being the chief commodity, with great quantities of haberdashery and ironmongery for use at home, and by their means such towns as Berwick, Perth, Leith, Stirling, Glasgow, and Dumbarton had grown into importance. There had been two great hindrances, however, to the proper growth of Scottish commerce. The one sprang from the lawless disposition of too many of the people themselves, who found their occupation rather in warlike than in peaceful ways, and who made it very difficult work for the few who applied themselves to trade to carry about their wares in safety and obtain adequate payment for their toil; the other from the constant rivalry of the English merchants and mariners who had excellent opportunities for damaging the commerce of the North, both in foreign markets and in the intermediate seas, and who certainly were not slow in using them. Hence it is that George Heriot of Edinburgh—the world-famous Jingling Geordie of Sir Walter Scott's, *Fortunes of Nigel*,—is the first Scottish merchant of whom we are able to speak in detail.

Edinburgh received its first charter at the hands of Robert Bruce in 1329, fifteen years after the battle of Bannockburn, the town of Leith, with its venerable harbour and mills, being by that document assigned to it as a dependency. In 1436 it was recognized as the capital of Scotland; and in 1409 James II. gave the citizens licence to enclose and fortify the town. From

that time it became the favourite residence of royalty and the centre of both the politics and the commerce of the nation. In 1477 it was found necessary to fix the localities of the different markets, which had hitherto been held at various places to suit the convenience of the traders, and with that end James III.'s confirmation was obtained to a scheme drawn up by the magistrates. The Tron or Weigh-house, whose site is now occupied by the Tron Kirk, was naturally the most central place of business. There butter, cheese, wool, and everything else sold by weight, had to be brought. Round that meeting-place the butchers were assembled. The market for meal and corn extended from the Tolbooth as far as Liberton's Wynd, and further to the left, as the name still indicates, was the Lawn-market for the sale of all kinds of cloth. Fish was sold between Friar Wynd and the Nether Bow, in High Street, and salt in Mid-dry's Wynd. Grass-market and Cattle-market mark the districts in which hay, straw, horses, and cows were collected; while the hatmakers and skimmers had a place assigned them nearer to St. Giles's Kirk. The wood and timber market lay between Dalrymple Yard and the Grey Friars; and the shoe-market stretched from Forrester's Wynd, westward. The mart for cutlery and smith's work was beneath the Nether Bow, about St. Mary's Wynd; and saddlery was to be bought near Greyfriars Kirk. These regulations did much for Edinburgh; but more was done by James III.'s 'Golden Charter,' conferred in gratitude to the citizens for their zeal in liberating him from a nine month's imprisonment in the Castle, enforced by the rebellious nobles. That charter made the Lord Provost of Edinburgh its hereditary high sheriff, and empowered the magistrates to frame what laws they deemed expedient for the good of their city. At the same time the incorporated trades received a standard or banner, known as the 'Blue Blanket,' even now not quite worn out, to be borne at all processions in token of the king's approval of their work. Yet more energetic was King James IV.,

who showed special favour to the merchants trading to foreign parts. 'They were encouraged,' says the historian of Scotland, 'to extend their trading voyages, to purchase foreign ships of war, to import cannon, and to superintend the building of ships of war at home. In these cases the monarch not only took an interest, but studied the subject with his usual enthusiasm, and personally superintended every detail. He conversed with his mariners, rewarded the most skilful and assiduous by presents, visited familiarly at the houses of his principal merchants and sea officers, and delighted in embarking on short voyages of experiment, in which, under the tuition of Wood and the Bartons, he became acquainted with the practical parts of navigation. The consequences of such conduct were highly favourable to him; he became as popular with his sailors as he was beloved by his nobility; his fame was carried by them to foreign countries; shipwrights, cannon founders, and foreign artisans of every description flocked to his court, from France, Italy, and the Low Countries.'

From places nearer home, also, enterprising men came up to enjoy the security and prosperity of commercial life in the Edinburgh of James IV. Among the number seems to have been George Heriot, grandfather of our present hero, and great-grandson of a James Heriot, spoken of as a 'confederate' of James I. To John, the son of this oldest Heriot known to us, Archibald, Earl of Douglas, in recompense for military service, assigned the lands of Trabroun, about four hundred acres, in the parish of Gladsmuir, in East Lothian, and the charter was confirmed by James I. in 1425. Of John Heriot's children we know nothing; but there can be no doubt that his grandson was the eldest George, who went up to Edinburgh near the beginning of the sixteenth century, married Mistress Christian Kyle, a citizen's daughter, and became a well-to-do goldsmith. His son, also named George, born in 1540, carried on the business. Goldsmiths at that time were not thought much of in Scotland. In social position they were classed with the hammermen; and it was not till 1581 that they received a charter of incorporation from the magistrates of Edinburgh, to be confirmed, with many fresh privileges, by James VI. in 1586. The second George Heriot, however, was a man of note in his day. He was five times deacon-convener of the incorporated

trades of Edinburgh, and on several occasions he represented that city in the Scottish Parliament. In 1596 he was chosen, with three others, to go and make excuse to king James touching the conduct of the citizens during a riot, more turbulent and treasonable than usual, that had caused the monarch to flee from the capital near the close of the year; and when he died in 1610, at the age of seventy, his sons, George and David, were allowed to set up a costly monument in his honour in the Greyfriars Kirkyard.

But the son who took the chief part in erecting that monument was destined to leave behind him a far nobler memorial of his own rare worth. George Heriot, the younger, was the oldest of ten children: two besides himself, Patrick and Margaret, being the offspring of Elizabeth Balderston, his father's first wife, and the seven others, David, Thomas, James, Christian, Sybilla, Janet, and Marian, being the children of a second wife, named Christian Blaw. George was born in 1563. Of his youth we know nothing, save that, his own mother being dead, he was brought up by one of his father's relations, about whom we find an interesting fragment of information some forty years later. 'I have a poor kinswoman, named Katherine Robinson,' wrote Heriot from London to his Edinburgh agent in 1620, 'who, besides the obligation of kindred, had the care and keeping of me when I was a child, who, I understand, is on the point of going to the hospital for lack of a house to dwell in. For preventing whereof I am willing to allow her 24*l.* Scots by year, which I intreat you to cause to have paid to her.'

At an early age the lad was apprenticed to his father's calling, and he steadily followed it all through his life. There is a tradition that, during his apprenticeship, he one day saw a foreign vessel discharging its ballast in Leith harbour, and observing a great quantity of gold amid the rubbish, bought it for a song, and so became rich. But that is not very likely. His father's help and example, and his own honesty and perseverance sufficiently account for the wealthy and influential position that he attained, without our seeking an explanation in any of the doubtful stories that are told, with few variations, about nearly every merchant prince.

In the beginning of 1587, when he was three or four and twenty, he married Mistress Christian Marjoribanks,

the orphan daughter of an Edinburgh merchant, and began business on his own account. On that occasion, his father gave him 1000 Scots marks, 'to be a beginning and pack to him,' as we read in the marriage contract, dated the 14th of January, 'besides the setting up of a booth to him, furnishing of his clothing to his marriage, and of workrooms and other necessities requisite to a booth,' valued at 500 marks more; and his wife brought him 1075 marks' worth of mills on the water of Leith, so that the joint capital of the two was 2144. 11s. 8d. sterling, a very respectable amount for a young goldsmith in the sixteenth century.

Heriot's first residence was in Fish-market Close. The shop, or booth, or kram which his father fitted up for him was by the Lady's Steps, at the north-east corner of St. Giles's Kirk. Since about the year 1555 St. Giles's Kirk-walls had got to be studded with such booths, the especial resort of goldsmiths and jewellers, watchmakers and booksellers; and the bazaar, if such it may be called, was not abolished till 1817. Hither came all the country people to buy whatever articles of ornament and luxury they stood in need of, such as silver spoons and spectacles, wedding-rings and watches. Like all other institutions of the sort, this also became a great meeting place for gossips. For centuries, as we learn from Mr. Robert Chambers's 'Traditions of Edinburgh,' it had been usual for the goldsmith to adjourn with his customer to John's Coffee-house or to Baijen-Hole, which was then a tavern, and to receive the order or the payment, in a comfortable manner, over a dram or a *caup* of small ale; which was on the first occasion paid for by the customer, and on the second by the trader; and over these refreshments it was natural for various topics of interest to be discussed.

On the 28th May, 1588, George Heriot was made a member of the Goldsmiths' Company of Edinburgh. By about that time his business had so increased that he found it necessary to take a larger booth. 'This shop and workshop,' to quote again from Mr. Chambers's work, 'existed till 1809, when the extension of the Advocates' Library occasioned the destruction of some interesting old closes to the west of St. Giles's Kirk, and altered all the features of this part of the town. There was a line of three small shops with wooden superstructures above them, extending between the door of the Old Tolbooth and that of the

Laird Council House, which occupied the site of the present lobby of the Signet Library. A narrow passageway led between these shops and the west end of St. Giles's; and George Heriot's shop, being in the centre of the three, was situated exactly opposite to the south window of the Little Kirk. The back windows looked into an alley behind, called Beith's or Bess Wynd. His name was discovered upon the architrave of the door, being carved in the stone, and apparently having served as his sign. The booth was also found to contain his forge and bellows, with a hollow stone, fitted with a stone cover or lid, which had been used as a receptacle for, and a means of extinguishing, the living embers of the furnace upon closing the shop at night.'

This larger shop was only about seven feet square. It was large enough, however, to hold the ungainly figure of James VI., besides the other famous customers who had dealings with Heriot. Often, according to tradition, the monarch came to look over the goldsmith's stores, to give him some commission, and to taste the new wine which he was shrewd enough to buy whenever a good opportunity occurred. One day, it is said, Heriot visited the king at Holyrood House, and, finding him sprawling before a fire of perfumed wood, praised it for its sweetness. 'Aye,' answered the king, 'and it is costly.' Heriot replied that if his Majesty would come to his shop he would show him a yet costlier one. 'Indeed, and I will,' exclaimed the monarch. Whereupon they proceeded to the booth against St. Giles's Kirk, and much to James's disgust, found nothing but a few poor flames burning in the goldsmith's forge. 'Is this, then, your fine fire?' he asked. 'Wait a little,' answered the merchant, 'till I get the fuel;' and then opening his chest, he took thence a bond for 2,000*l.* which he had lent to the king, and threw it among the embers. 'Now,' he asked, 'whether is your Majesty's fire or mine more expensive?' 'Yours, most certainly, Master Heriot,' was the answer.

Let all who like believe the tale. Apocryphal as it is, however, it is at any rate clear that Heriot was rich enough to pay his sovereign a compliment of this kind over and over again, without seriously feeling the loss to his exchequer. On the 17th of July, 1597, he was made Goldsmith in Ordinary to Anne of Denmark, James's good-for-nothing wife, being appointed to the post 'for all the days of his life, with

all fees, duties, and casualties proper and due to the said office;’ and on the 4th of April, 1601, he was promoted to the yet more lucrative business of goldsmith to the king himself, an apartment in Holyrood Palace being fitted up for his especial use. The direct ‘fees’ for these offices were small, but the indirect emoluments derived from them were very great, and the ‘duties and casualties’ multifarious indeed. It is computed that Heriot’s bills for jewels bought or manufactured for Queen Anne alone, in the few years prior to 1608, amounted to 50,000*l.* of Scottish money, about equal in value to our modern sterling; and James’s debts were larger still. Let this bill be cited as a specimen:—‘September, 1599. Paid at his Majesty’s special command, with advice of the Lords of Secret Council, to George Heriot, younger, goldsmith, for a cupboard presented to Monsieur Vetonu, French Ambassador, containing the following pieces:—two basins, two lavers belonging thereto, two flagons, two chandeliers, six cups with covers, two cups without covers, one laver for water, one saltfalt (?) with one cover; all chiselled work and double overgilt, weighing 2 stone, 14 lbs. 5 oz., at 8 marks the ounce, 4160*l.*’ of Scottish money. In the beginning of 1601, moreover, appears a charge of 1333*l.* 6*s.*, ‘for a jewel wherewith his Highness presented his dearest bedfellow in a new year’s gift.’

The making and procuring of jewellery for the King and Queen, and for the crowds of nobles who followed their example of wanton extravagance and of empty show, was but a part of Heriot’s business. He was royal pawnbroker and money-lender. The first known instance of his employment in these ways appears in June, 1599, when we find his Majesty writing to Lord Newbattle, and bidding him, with all haste and diligence, obtain money enough ‘to satisfy and make payment to George Heriot,’ of a certain sum, not named, ‘out of the first and readiest of our taxation, seeing our dear bedfellow’s jewels were engaged for this sum, and that it toucheth us nearly in honour.’ The honour of both King and Queen, however, was from this time often very nearly touched indeed. The spendthrift monarchs, never owning money enough for the payment of their lawful debts, were ever rushing into some fresh extravagance, and to that end pawning everything on which a little gold could be raised.

Their imprudence, and the imprudence that their example caused in the courtiers and lordlings in attendance upon them, had this effect—true in individual cases, though, as a wise political economy, after many centuries of bungling, is beginning to make clear, altogether false as regards the general progress of society,—that it was ‘good for trade.’ It was good for George Heriot’s trade, at any rate. He thrived wonderfully during the last ten years or so of James’s Scottish rule; and when the King went southward to take possession of the English crown, the goldsmith, after providing him and his attendant nobles with vast quantities of jewellery for their personal adornment, and with a cart load of rings to be given to the English courtiers who were expected to assemble on the road, packed up his traps as soon as he was able, and travelled southward likewise, to establish himself in London ‘foranent the New Exchange,’ where the booths erected by Sir Thomas Gresham offered much better facilities ‘for trade than those that were clustered round St. Giles’s Kirk in High Street, Edinburgh.

This was in the summer of 1603. For the remaining twenty years of his life Heriot seems to have spent nearly all his time in London and its neighbourhood. He was too much needed at court to be able to pay more than flying visits, whether for business or for pleasure, to his native city or to other parts.

He was not, however, as in Scotland, exclusive holder of the office of goldsmith or pawnbroker. Two Englishmen, one of them as rich and influential as himself, were also made King’s Jewellers almost as soon as James had taken possession of his crown. These were Sir William Herrick and Sir John Spilman. Spilman was the first English paper-maker known to us. In 1588, or earlier, he set up a mill at Dartford; in 1598 he obtained from Queen Elizabeth an order ‘that he only and no others should buy linen rags and make paper;’ and in 1605 his mills were personally inspected by King James, and won for him the honour, such as it was, of a Stuart knighthood.

Herrick was a more notable man. He was one of a noble family of merchant princes, famous in the annals of Leicestershire. Old John Herrick, his father, who died in 1589, at the age of seventy-six, had been a well-to-do gentleman, having lived at his ease, according to the quaint record of his tombstone, ‘with

Mary, his wife, in one house, full two-and-fifty years, and in all that time never buried man, woman, nor child, though they were sometimes twenty in household.' He had twelve children, and his wife, living till she was ninety-seven, 'did see, before her departure, of her children, children's children, and their children, to the number of a hundred and forty-two.' Nearly every member of this large and singularly happy family fared well in life. One of the daughters married Lawrence Hawes, and another married Sir Thomas Bennett, who was Lord Mayor of London in 1603, both of them wealthy merchants. Robert, the eldest son, was an ironmonger and ironfounder in Leicester, thrice mayor of his native town, and its representative in Parliament in 1588. He had extensive ironworks, and paper-mills as well, in Staffordshire. 'You know,' he wrote to his brother, 'that such pleasant youths as I am do delight in the pleasant woods of Cank, to hear the sweet birds sing, the hammers go, and beetles in the paper-mills at the same place also, for him that hath got most of his wealth for this fifty years or near that way, and now find as good iron as was there this forty years, as good weight, as good workmen, as honest fellows, as good entertainment. What want you more?' He died 'very godly,' at the age of seventy-eight, in 1618; and his portrait was placed by admiring friends in the town hall of Leicester, with this strange inscription—

'His picture, whom you here see,
When he is dead and rotten,
By this shall be remembered be,
When he would be forgotten.'

Nicholas, the next son of worthy John Herrick, and father of Robert Herrick, the poet, went up to make his fortune in London. He was articulated, in 1556, to a goldsmith in Cheapside, where in due time he set up a goodly shop of his own. He died in the prime of life, in consequence of a fall from an upper window of his house into the street, leaving one merchant son, at any rate, to carry on his business, but having for a more noted successor his younger brother William, the compeer of Heriot. This William, born in 1557, was apprenticed to his brother in 1574 or 1575. He employed well his opportunities of becoming both a rich and a useful man.

While George Heriot was growing necessary to James VI. in Scotland, William Herrick was making for himself as important a position in England

under Queen Elizabeth. Gresham being dead, he inherited something of his work. To the Queen and her nobles he lent immense sums of money; and out of the interest thereon, as well as out of the profits of his goldsmith's trade, he was rich enough in 1595 to buy Beamanor Park, in Leicestershire. Before that time he had been sent by his sovereign on an embassy to the Porte. In 1601 he became M.P. for Leicester, on that occasion 'giving to the town in kindness twelve silver spoons.' On King James's accession, he resigned his seat in Parliament, and on the 2nd of May, 1603, in consideration of his long and faithful service to his late mistress, he was made principal jeweller to the new monarch. On Easter Tuesday in 1605, writes a rather envious correspondent of Winwood's, 'one Master William Herrick, a goldsmith in Cheapside, was knighted for making a hole in the great diamond the King doth wear. The party little expected the honour; but he did his work so well as won the King to an extraordinary liking of it.' In the same year he again entered Parliament for Leicester, besides being chosen Alderman of Farringdon Without. From service in the latter office, however, as well as from future employment as Sheriff of London, he was excused on payment of 300*l.*, 'in respect that the said Sir William is the King's Majesty's sworn servant, and cannot so necessarily afford the daily service as behoveth.' On the 4th of January, 1606, we find, he tendered to his sovereign a splendid amethyst ring, as a new year's gift, and in the records of the next two dozen years occur a great many entries of other presents and loans made by him to James I. 'Since my being teller,' he wrote in a petition dated 1616, 'I have lent unto his Majesty divers great sums of money *gratis*, which none of my fellows ever did, to my loss and disadvantage of at least 3000*l.*' The debt was much greater when Herrick retired from public life. He was a rich man, however, and found good use for his wealth in charitable works and schemes for local improvement in Leicester and its neighbourhood. He died in 1653, at the ripe age of ninety-six.

Both his and Spilman's names are frequently found in conjunction with Heriot's, both as jewel-makers and as money-lenders to the Crown; but the Scotchman appears to have been the special favourite, as was natural, with the Scottish sovereign and his spouse. In the six and a-half years previous to

Christmas, 1609, the Queen's debts alone for jewellery and goldsmith's work amounted to 20,500*l.*, the principal creditors being Heriot and Sir John Spilman. Her Majesty being unhappy about this, we are told, the Privy Council took the case in hand, and gave authority for raising that sum at ten per cent. interest. Whether the whole was collected or not we do not know; but on Christmas Eve, George Heriot received a six months' bill for 5245*l.* Long before it fell due, however, other debts were piled up, and the heap went on accumulating from month to month. In November, 1611, the Queen was in Heriot's debt 9000*l.* on account of presents made to her eldest son, Prince Henry, alone; and in July, 1613, a year after Henry's death, was issued a warrant from the Council for payment of 4000*l.* to Heriot on account of a sumptuous chain and halberd, set with diamonds, which he had procured for him. No sooner was the hopeful heir to the English throne removed from this school of extravagance than his younger brother was brought in to it.

In March, 1615, we find a warrant for the payment of 2952*l.* 1*s.* 4*d.* expended by Heriot on jewels and workmanship for Prince Charles, and numerous similar charges appear in later years. When the prince and his Me-phistophiles, the Duke of Buckingham, were preparing to start on their disgraceful journey to Spain, George Heriot was sent to the jewel-house at the Tower to assist in selecting a number of the best jewels for Charles's use, and in furnishing them up and supplying their deficiencies with new workmanship. He laboured night and day to complete the business in time. Yet hardly had the adventurers reached Madrid and made their way to the presence of the Infanta, whom it was hoped Charles would get for a wife, than Buckingham thought it needful to write home to his 'dear dad and gossip,' complaining of their poor estate. 'Hitherto you have been so sparing of jewels,' he said, 'that, whereas you thought to have sent him sufficiently for his own wearing and to present to his mistress, who I am sure will shortly now lose that title, and to lend me, that I, to the contrary, have been forced to lend him.' 'I confess,' wrote Charles himself to the same effect, 'that you have sent more jewels than, at my departure, I thought to have had use of; but since my coming, seeing many jewels worn here, and that my bravery can

consist of nothing else'—poor Charles!—'and besides, that some of them which you have appointed me to give to the Infanta, in Steenie's opinion and mine, are not fit to be given to her, therefore I have taken this boldness to entreat your Majesty to send more for my own wearing and for giving to my mistress.' To which there is this characteristic postscript in Steenie's handwriting; 'I, your dog, say you have many jewels neither fit for your own, your son's, nor your daughter's wearing, but very fit to bestow on those who must necessarily have presents, and this way will be least chargeable to your Majesty, in my poor opinion.' That correspondence with notable truth reflects the character of the foolish king, his misguided son, and their joint friend and tempter. It led, as it seems, to the giving of fresh commissions to Heriot, and provided him with the last important service shown by him to the king.

We have here given two or three out of several illustrations of the use made of the goldsmith by his employers. Let these two curious petitions, undated, but evidently written in or near the year 1618, help to show how he was treated. One is addressed to Queen Anne, who died on the 2nd of March, 1619, and 'most humbly sheweth that, whereas the last time her gracious Majesty was pleased to admit her suppliant to her royal presence, it then pleased her highness to regret that her gracious intentions towards the payment of her debts were much hindered by the scarcity of her Majesty's treasure, whereupon her suppliant did resolve to forbear to trouble and importune her Majesty until it should please God to second her royal disposition with greater plenty than now it is,' he is at last compelled to remind her of 'the extreme burden of interests wherewith he is borne down, and which he must shortly either pay or perish,' unless she will pay him a little part at least of the money that she owes him. The other petition is addressed to the king himself. 'Whereas there is due unto your Majesty's suppliant,' since February, 1611, it sets forth, 'the sum of 18,000*l.* sterling and above, which remaineth yet unpaid, the want whereof has brought your highness's suppliant to so hard an extremity as he hath been enforced, for maintaining of his credit, to take up on interest the sum of 15,000*l.*, engaging his friends, and laying to pawn all his stock of jewels and commodities wherein he is accustomed to deal, to his utter over-

throw, not having them in his hands to sell for his benefit when there is occasion, his humble suit is that (in consideration of his readiness of delivery to your Majesty's use, not only of his own estate, but likewise whatsoever his credit could procure, and of his twenty-four years' service to your Majesty, the queen, and your royal children, without having ever sought or obtained any recompense for the same, as others of his profession and meaner desert have had,) your Majesty will be graciously pleased to commiserate the hard estate your suppliant is brought to, so as he may have satisfaction of that which hath been so long owing?

There must have been some exaggeration in those statements. Heriot grew richer every year. But it is clear that King James VI. was a thoughtless borrower and a tardy payer of his debts. To make profitable his dealings with so slippery a piece of royalty, Heriot doubtless found it necessary to put a stiff price on every article of jewellery that he sold, and to demand a large interest for the great sums of money that he lent. The dignity of his position, however, as court jeweller, and the fame of his tact and honesty as a banker and money-lender, brought him plenty of custom from other and more trustworthy employers.

Of Heriot's busy life in London a clearer and completer notion is to be derived from the fictitious but truthfully-drawn portrait in Scott's 'Fortunes of Nigel,' than from any mere statement of the few authentic facts that have come down to us. The Jingling Geordie who, by worth of character, goodness of heart, and rectitude of principle, set a noble example of manliness in an over-selfish and ungenerous age—who 'walked through life with a steady pace and an observant eye, neglecting no opportunity of assisting those who were not possessed of the experience necessary for their own guidance,' was, as far we can judge, the veritable George Heriot of real life. The little that we actually know of his private history shows him to have been a man as kind and self-sacrificing in his relations with others as he was upright and persevering in the pursuit of his own fortunes.

Home troubles did their work in the ripening and ennobling of his character. His first wife, Christian Marjoribanks, died before they had been wedded more than twelve or fifteen years, prior, at any rate, to his removal from Edinburgh to London. That match may have been like most marriage unions of

those times, one of policy rather than affection; but it must have been no slight grief that the two sons whom this wife bore to him were lost at sea, doubtless in performing the short voyage to London. In September, 1608, when his age was five-and-forty, he paid a visit to Edinburgh, and took for a second wife Mistress Alison, the daughter of James Primrose, clerk to the Privy Council in Scotland for about forty years from 1602, and grandfather of the first Earl of Roseberry. The young wife, one of nineteen children, was only fifteen years old. She did not live to be twenty. She died in childbirth on the 16th of April 1612, as George Heriot recorded on the handsome monument erected to her memory in St. Gregory's Church, which formed one of the towers of old St. Paul's, 'a woman richly endowed with all good gifts of mind and body and of pious disposition.' The tears impressed on tombstones seldom go for much. But the loss of his young and beautiful wife, and the loss with her of his hope of an heir, seems to have deeply affected him. 'She cannot be too much lamented,' he wrote on a private document, intended for no eye but his own, some time after her death.

Some evidence of Heriot's affection for this young wife, moreover, as well as of his natural good-heartedness, appears in his subsequent treatment of his father-in-law, James Primrose. Hardly had his daughter been buried, as it seems, before the old man, finding it hard work to maintain his too large family, and not very particular about the ways in which he scraped together the requisite funds, made a singular claim upon the widower. He sent to Heriot, bidding him straightway refund the dowry of 5000 marks that he had given to his daughter, and also supply him with between 4000 and 5000 more as compensation for the expenses he had been put to in suitably conducting the marriage. Heriot, reasonably enough, disclaimed all liability in the matter; but generously offered to return the amount of the dowry. With this, however, Primrose was not satisfied; he threatened to institute legal proceedings against his son-in-law, and through more than four years he kept up on the subject an angry and foolish correspondence, only interesting for its illustration of Heriot's patience and good feeling. At last the dispute was settled through the interposition of Lord Binning, afterwards Earl of Haddington, Heriot paying the 5000 marks, and Primrose being satis-

fied therewith. On the 4th of October, 1616, the merchant wrote to Adam Lawtie, his agent in Edinburgh, expressing his joy that at length there seemed likely to be 'some end of that matter in controversy betwixt my good father and me, it being a business so unworthy of my friend's travails. As concerning that apology,' he continues, with a pardonable bit of sarcasm, 'which you think he minds to write, I do not much regard it, being assured to find much more friendship in his words than I ever had in his actions. In a word, as God has commanded, I am resolved to seek peace and follow after it, and leave him to his own humours, till his time come, as I thank God mine is, when he may get leisure to think upon his oversights, of which number he may peradventure reckon his subtle temporising dealing with me to be one.'

Heriot was a very honest, but not a very graceful, letter-writer. But, graceful or ungraceful, we would fain have more of his correspondence. He appears to have been too busy a man to write more letters than he could help; at any rate, very few have come down to us, and in those few the personal allusions are scanty indeed. One other sentence about himself, however, is contained in the letter already quoted from. 'By God's merciful providence,' he says, 'I am like to recover of that heavy disease wherewith I have been so long and dangerously afflicted; for, as I did write to you, the swelling is much diminished and the humour doth daily resolve; so that I hope, by God's grace, to have yet some small respite of my life.'

He lived rather more than seven years after that, steadily accumulating wealth, and learning how most worthily to apply it. 'It has pleased God to try me with the loss of two children,' he is made to say in "*The Fortunes Nigle*;" 'but I am patient and thankful, and for the wealth God has sent me, it shall not want inheritors while there are orphan lads in Auld Reekie.' And so it is. Seventy years had passed since the venerable church and monastery of the Grey Friars, endowed with a noble library by the will of Sir Richard Whittington, had been handed over to the City of London through the influence of Sir Richard Graham and by Edward VI., with Sir Richard Dobbs, Lord Mayor of London, for a noble coadjutor, established as Christ's Hospital, 'where poor children, innocent and fatherless, are trained up to the knowledge of God and virtuous exercises, to

the overthrow of beggary,' and George Heriot resolved to use his princely fortune in building a similar institution for his native city. 'Forasmuch,' he wrote in an assignation of his property, dated the 3rd of September, 1623, 'as I intend, by God's grace, in the zeal of piety, to found and erect a public pious and charitable work within the borough of Edinburgh, to the glory of God, for the public weal and ornament of the said borough of Edinburgh, for the honour and due regard which I have and bear to my native soil and mother city, and in imitation of the public pious and religious work founded within the City of London, called Christ's Hospital, then to be called in all time (here Heriot left a blank which the executors filled up with his own name) Hospital and Seminary of Orphans, for education, nursing, and up-bringing of youth, being poor orphans and fatherless children of decayed burgesses and freemen of the said borough, to such competent number as the means and maintenance allowed thereupon are able to afford, where they may have some reasonable allowance, for their maintenance, of food, lodging and raiment, within the said Hospital and Seminary, until they attain the age of fifteen, at which time they may be set forth in prenticeships to learn some honest trade or occupation, or otherwise sent to colleges or universities according to their capacities.'

George Heriot did not live long after that precise statement of the wish that had doubtless been gaining strength in his mind for years. On the 21st of October, Adam Lawtie wrote to express his sorrow at his friend's 'present heavy sickness and disease,' and to assure him that if the property was properly assigned to this charitable purpose, there could be no fear of its falling into the hands of his eldest niece, the daughter of a brother who had spent his life in Italy; a point which appears to have given Heriot much trouble in these last months. To obviate the danger, he formally prepared his will on the 10th of December, giving numerous bequests to his kindred, friends, and servants, and taking especial care of two illegitimate children, one of whom, Elizabeth Band, was at this time thirteen years old,—the other, Margaret Scott, only five. His whole estate amounted to 47,507*l.* 16*s.* 11*d.* Half of it was disposed of in legacies or absorbed by bad debts. The residue, 23,625*l.* 10*s.* 3*d.*, was left in the hands of his executors, the provost, bailiffs,

and council of Edinburgh, to be spent in establishing the famous and noble Heriot's Hospital.

That hospital is the merchant's true monument. He died on the 12th of February, 1624, and was buried on the 20th, in the churchyard of St. Martin's-in-the-

Fields, near which he had bought a house, and dwelt for some time past.

But nothing is known of his last days, and the tombstone erected to his memory is not now to be traced. It can be spared, however, so long as Heriot's Hospital exists.* H. R. F. B.

* A very interesting account of the institution is contained in Dr. Steeven's 'History of George Heriot's Hospital,' of which an enlarged edition was published by Dr. Bedford, the present governor, in 1858. To that work, as well as to the private courtesy of the editor, we are indebted for much information about the subject of this paper. Here also we desire to acknowledge our debt to the Rev. Samuel Lysons, M.A., F.R.S., for much help afforded by his 'Model Merchant of the Middle Ages,' in the preparation of the sketch of Whittington's life—a work contained in Chapter III. of our series of articles on 'The Merchant Princes of England,'—an acknowledgment that was accidentally omitted at the time of publication.

CHARADE.

A MATRON watched, in the evening fall,
The shadow-dance on the parlour wall;
The flickering shapes, that do their rites
In happy homes, on winter nights;
The Lares, at their spirit game,
Who play at the will of the wizard flame.
Weird shadow-forms, whose gambols start
Their partner-shadows in the heart,
Strange phantom fancies, born and nurst
'Mid the shrill piping of my First,
That reel and set, and leap and fall
With the wild shadows on the wall.
'Ring out,' she said, 'my merry First!
Thy cheery flute, in the evening's calm,
Has played, through many happy years,
To my Second a nightly psalm.
By the firelight, which thou fill'st with song,
My thankful heart kneels down to pray;
Or fancy takes the pilgrim staff,
And wanders far away—
Away to the Holy Land of youth,
Beyond my Second's household sea,
Where the sun rose up, whose light has made
A pleasant day for me—
Life's Orient, where that heart of mine
Bows yet before an early shrine,
As memory's crystal shows my soul
The merry morning of my Whole.

'Ah! merry morn!—a morn of June!
The world seemed set to a new sweet tune;
The thrush threw unknown music round;
The lark, that makes the sunshine sound,
Poured down from heaven, that morn, a strain
Nor heard before, nor heard again.
The hedge had scents, and the rose had hucs,
That were born, and died, with that morning's dews.
And the rills, at their sweetest, never play
The air I caught on that far-off day.

I wonder where the breeze is now
 That blew that day on my happy brow ;
 Or if some passing angel thing
 Had fanned my forehead with its wing.
 The sunshine lay on the meadows broad,
 At once the eye and the breath of God ;
 The shadows crouched by the old tree-roots
 To watch my footsteps pass,
 And a voice, like the song of my First to-night,
 Was stirring through the grass.
 I heard from the glens the cuckoo shout,
 Through the blaze of noon—yet the bats were out ;
 And when I reached the open plain,
 That had nor wall, nor fence, nor thicket,
 Mine eyes met first the well-known form,
 And it stood by a little wicket !
 Ah ! well-known form !—its shadow falls
 Like light, to-night, on my household walls ;
 And I hold *it* fast, while the vapours roll
 Back o'er that morning of my Whole.

' For, many times, on many nights,
 We met again by other wickets ;
 But *they* made way through a sweet-briar hedge,
 And led to rosy thickets.
 The wheeling bat, on its restless wing,
 The moon made, there, a spectral thing ;
 And the shadows that hid near the roots by day
 Lay far abroad in her quiet ray.
 If we could have felt when the wind went by,
 We might have heard the roses sigh ;
 But we took no note of the incense cast,
 Though the shadow bowed as the spirit passed.
 What heeded we, through the holy hush,
 If the chiming in the grass were still ?
 Why, we never heard the nightingale,
 That sang from the woody hill ;
 And we had no ear for the minstrel breeze
 When it swept the leaf-strings of the trees !

' Ah ! place of roses !—love's own court !
 But we'd better make a long tale short.
 In what they gave, for what they took,
 The years with us have richly reckoned ;
 For our meetings had their issue meet—
 They ended in my Second.
 And, now, my First's clear piping cry
 Seems, through the firelight, to my soul
 My Second's voice, that utters back
 A blessing on my Whole !

T. K. HERVEY.

CONCERNING LANGEN-SCHWALBACH.

WHEN, as a child, I asked what the use of such and such a fly or frog, or other unlovely being was, I used to be informed that it ate up some other and smaller creature of the same kind—and that that was its use. To prove this admirable arrangement of nature, I was further shown a drop of water magnified powerfully, and a scene of devouring and being devoured was developed before my eyes, that filled me with unutterable horror.

Everything feeds upon something else, was the moral of the story; and this accounts, to me, for the relative existences of the Schwabach lodging-house keepers and their tenants. We arrived there in the height of the season, when their anthropophagical appetites are at the keenest, and we were treated accordingly.

In a pour of rain we had driven from Wiesbaden, and stopped under the Porte Cochère of the 'Poste.' 'Any rooms?' 'No rooms—none to be got anywhere,' the 'Poste' said. A handsome personage, with a brass ticket on his cap, courteously proposed to try and find some for us elsewhere, and we went, like Noah's dove, up and down, literally over the face of the waters, seeking rest for the sole of our foot, and finding none.

In all Schwabach there were but three lodgings to choose from—a saloon with two beds, over a tailor's shop; an impossible arrangement of doors and windows, with a bed in the middle of each draught, in the *Ville Verner*; and a stuffy little suite *au second*, in the principal street. We refused each in turn, hoping to find others; and finally came humbly to the stuffy room *au second*, taking them perforce for three weeks.

'For three weeks or not at all,' the landlady said, with emphasis, and we were obliged to take them; the alternative of passing a few nights in the street, until better rooms should be vacant, struck us as unpleasant that evening, as it was raining.

I applauded the landlady, be it
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understood—I applaud her highly; without such a *coup d'état* she never would have secured lodgers. We had been too highly exalted at Homburg, had learnt to consider certain attentions, certain comforts our due. It was her wise and salutary endeavour during our stay to bring us to a proper level. I am sorry to say, instead of submitting with Christian resignation to the trials daily awarded to us in our sour and scanty breakfast, we rebelled, and took our meals at the 'Allée Saal,' the great hotel in the garden—taking our breakfast on a little green table under trees, in the delicious morning sunshine.

'Schwabach is very different from Homburg,' said my niece, gravely, and with a tone of reproach, after her first day at the former. With my usual affable condescension, I remarked to her, that it *was* very different: and the reason is this, Schwabach is not a gambling Spa. People who come there do so for bodily health only, and not for spiritual injury also. The moral benefit to the place is doubtless great, although the outward signs thereof are not so; and I had to repeat forcibly to my niece the nursery adage, 'It is better to be good than to be pretty,' before she could understand why, when a company of gamblers undertakes the charge of pleasure-grounds and buildings, the effect should be so much more pleasing than where disinterested and untidy virtue wields the executive power. There is nothing to tempt the idle and vicious to Schwabach—nothing to tempt the idle and virtuous *non plus*; and of these two classes the society at Homburg is composed. Cœlebs won't find a wife here, and would-be Mrs. Cœlebs consequently does not come here, where she will not be sought. Ladies need not be dull, for they can change their dress three times a day, and it is a beautiful proof of the amiability of the fair sex that they would do so, and put on all their airs and graces just as much for the few old fogies at Schwabach as they had

done for the gay squires at Homburg. But for a man—a real, live man, neither paralytic nor dyspeptic—there is nothing to do; if the lake were big enough he must drown himself; you see, he cannot talk about his symptoms—he *has* no symptoms, and that is the great secret of conversation at a place of this sort. One's symptoms (I had a new one every day): to compare, describe, hear description of them, may be rendered, by one who knows how to *ménager* it, matter for daily and exciting conversation.

There exist certain little pictures, lithographs, depicting Schwalbach as a spacious and lovely site, wherein lofty and splendid hotels overlook beautiful gardens, open meadows watered by clear lakes, shrouded by stately avenues and lovely groves. Prancing cavaliers and dashing phaetons are represented parading the well-built streets. Streets! there is only one. They are lying prophets, those little pictures, and not the least like Schwalbach.

It is so narrow a valley that it looks like a crack in the Tennessee range, with uneasy, tottering, steep-roofed houses pushed into it to keep it open as far as they are able. The valley widens a little at the end; the hotels make as good a front as they can at the head of the straggling houses; and in front of them, the Weinbrunnen and its bath-house stand in a sort of shrubbery, where the band plays, and where the *beau monde* assemble in the morning, midday, and evening, and where the grass is almost equally scattered with children, bits of paper, and shreds of needlework. The well is sheltered by a pavilion, and furnished with two tables, covered with coloured glasses. There is beyond the garden a meadow, with a walk bordered by small trees all round it, and in the meadow there is a little lake, with a big boat and two swans in it. When the big boat is in motion, the swans must retire to the shore, there is not room for all three.

THE BATH.

'AT ELEVEN, OR AS NEAR ELEVEN AS POSSIBLE.'

'The bath,' said my prescription; so I went under the arcades of the pink bath-house, rang the bell at the bureau, and had an interview with the 'Governor of the Bath Commission,' an imposing personage, Captain in the Grand Ducal Forces of Nassau, and dispenser of the large green ticket, which, to use their own words, 'entitles the holder to the use of the premises for an hour.'

To the right and left of the 'bureau' runs a long dark corridor. A damp smell pervades it. Little doors stood ajar all along it, disclosing vaulted dimly-lighted chambers, with an ominous descent to a lower level at the further end of each. To the use of one of these chambers my ticket entitled me. Observe the discreet, yet mysterious permission—not too narrowly inquiring into what one did, shut in alone with that dark, seething pool below the steps. How many a timid mind may not have crouched shrinkingly into the canvas-covered sympathy of the sofa, and spent the allotted hour unable to summon courage to go down and immerse him or herself in the gloomy liquid!

I was reading attentively the rules printed on a card, and suspended near the door, when a sonorous voice proclaimed 'So—ist jertig?' and the familiar, who with his wand had stirred the bath, and roused it to a sense of coming duties, left, in two strides, the apartment and me. Nerving myself to the effort, I divested myself of all protection, left my outward insignia on the sofa, with inward envy of their lot, and stepped into my bath. A million little bubbles rushed to the surface, indignant at my intrusion; hissing noises, bubbling and seething, saluted my entry. Steam rose in slight clouds from the planks round my bath. My heart beat; but I had the courage to lie still and await the result of all this commotion. Gazing on the opposite wall, perceiving the persuasive ticket thereon suspended, and in-

wardly resolving to comply with its request, and open the waste-pipe before I left the bath, I felt the water, which at my entry had struck me as being chilly, grow gradually warmer and warmer. A delicious, tingling sensation pervaded my limbs. I looked and beheld myriads of little gas bubbles, like sprites, settling on the pores of my skin. At the slightest movement they flew off, angrily fizzing when they reached the surface. Up my spine ran little bubbles; under my ears they burst with a whispering, chuckling sound! I was growing hotter and hotter—what a delicious bath!

My twenty minutes were expired. I got out, rubbed and scrubbed myself vehemently, and sallied forth, a giant refreshed, ready to run a race, or eat a German one-o'clock dinner. A glass of ice-cold Weinbrunnen, and a run, after the glass, was a positive enjoyment; and when the numberless little chambers had sent forth their occupants into the garden, it was quite pleasant to mark the cheery rosy faces that had been so washed out and pallid at their morning promenade.

THE TABLE D'HÔTE.

Our landlady had said, 'For three weeks, or not at all.' So the hotels said, 'At one o'clock, or not at all,' the only way to deal with a mixed multitude—to be preemptory. You had no choice; either a half-cold, wholly uncomfortable dinner in your single sitting-room at your own house, or one-o'clock table d'hôte. B—— used to say he could not stand the table d'hôte; but I really found the long, noisy repast of great benefit to me. It took up a great deal of time, to begin with, and was a wholesome discipline as well. There was really much food for mental exercise. Hope,—that it might be better than yesterday. Faith (*i. e.*, belief),—it would not be so bad to-morrow. Charity,—towards the waiter, who gave you nothing that you could eat, and who carried off the only dish you fancied. Besides—a naturalist's curiosity to discover why the German fowls should have four legs a-piece, and the philanthropist's regret they

should meet such sudden and untimely death.

And then such variety in modes of eating; the knife-swallowing trick to be seen without extra charge.

If there was no other cause of gratulation, one could always be thankful that another day had passed without the avalanche of plates and forks having descended on one's head, as it had threatened to do between each course.

'Splendid'—I heard a worthy Dutch dame call it, to her newly-arrived friend, 'Splendid dinner! what variety, what quantity!' Why should I differ from the Dutch lady?

Schwalbach provides for the entertainment of its guests, according to its ideas of entertainment, and it announces its intentions towards them by *affiches* on every green tree—he that walks may read—and it becomes quite an interesting collection on the favoured shrubs. 'Guests at the Spa courteously invited' to a concert—to a ball, and a performance of conjuring tricks. Wonderful, unexampled, the latter are said to be by the *affiches* of last week. The eyes of the innocent German frauleins stood wide with prospective astonishment, as they stood and read out to each other the list of wonders to be exhibited at half-past eight precisely in the great salon of the Allée Saal. I do not suppose the exhibition itself was half so astounding as its description on the fir-trees.

When the ball was announced, great excitement pervaded the female society; much canvassing as to probabilities, proprieties, and so on. I confess to have been surprised at the evident preoccupation of my niece, Lydia, on the subject. Some doubt seemed to cloud her anticipations; her eye wandered anxiously over the ghost-like files of grey-cloaken beings at that morning's walk. I overheard a meaning whisper: 'One—two—no, not more than two.' What could she mean?

We betook ourselves at nine o'clock to the Allée Saal. Some worthy Teutons were still drinking sour wine and eating ham in the

dining-room; but the great salon was lighted up with all its might, the band was playing with all its strength, and groups of ladies were crowding it.

'Well, my dear,' said I to Lydia, observing with surprise the despondency of her eager countenance, 'what more do you want? is it not very hot, and very noisy, and a great place? I thought that constituted a good ball?'

'Uncle,' said Lydia, in a tone of stifled emotion, 'there are no *partners*!'

I looked round, and in truth could see only two men of any kind in the assembly. Girls were spinning round and round with girls; it was a ball to gladden the heart of Spurgeon. No 'dancing promisky,' as an old woman once told me; but sadly disappointing to my charming niece. We returned home, agreeing that the *affiche* at Schwalbach should be entitled 'Pleasures of Hope.'

The little *désillusionnement* did not prevent our fixing all manner of expectations on a fresh *affiche* that in large letters set forth, for the following Sunday—

'A Magnificent Shooting Fest on the great Plateau of Schwalbach! Music! Dancing! Fête Champêtre! Procession of the Company of Gymnasts! of the Shooters, et cetera, et cetera! Grand display of Fireworks, and Illumination of the Lake!

'The Procession will set out at 3 P.M.'

The glories of the Frankfort Schutzenfest had predisposed us to admiration. We resolved to look from our windows at the procession, and to feel ourselves martyrs to our best principles, in denying ourselves the spectacle of the Fête Champêtre. At three o'clock all heads were out of the windows, all eyes fixed on the turn of the street. A violent drumming began to be heard. A tall man strode first, waving a huge flag. Then came three drums, vigorously beaten; then the ordinary band, adorned with branches of the much-enduring

ticket-bearing fir-trees. The band was followed by five men in white jackets, keeping what they supposed was military step, but which was rather the reverse. 'The Gymnasts,' said somebody; but an evil, sceptical spirit within me answered, 'Only those idle Dienst-men, that are always before the door.' Then came some ragged boys—the 'Shooters,' I presume; then came—nothing more. 'That was all—' etcetera, 'etcetera' never appeared at all!

After sunset three rockets and a blue light were let off at the pond in the garden—the big boat stood out in grand relief—the German dames said, 'Pracht voll' in subdued voices; and most of us caught cold in our heads from the damp fog that had been spectator of the illumination as well as ourselves.

Moral of the story—We did not read any more *affaires*.

CONCERNING AGRICULTURE IN LANGEN-SCHWALBACH.

Nothing strikes an Englishman more forcibly, in passing through the richly-wooded and beautiful country of Nassau, than the utter absence either of farms or of country residences. Acre after acre of cultivated ground lies deserted and alone, unfenced open country, not a hedge-row, not a paling dividing it; no clumps of old ash and elm sheltering a gabled farm-house, with its noisy, cheerful feathered life about the doors; no meadows dotted with sheep and speckled with cows! By-the-by, what despair water-colourists must be in for want of the said cows! Burnt sienna must be absolutely useless in a German colour-box. I think cows seem to be the correct thing for foreground; and there are none visible in Nassau. I did not believe in sheep at all, and had a private theory of my own respecting mutton chops, till one day, on our way to Hohenstein, we saw a flock of lean yellow quadrupeds, headed by an uncouth dog, and watched by a picturesquely dirty shepherd. Our driver pointed with his whip to the shepherd, and said, 'But a few days ago a Russian prince had driven along that road, had seen that man, and had thus

accosted him: "Wilt thou go with me to Russia, and be my chief shepherd? Thou shalt receive one hundred pounds a year and a house of thine own, and be the head over all my flocks?" "No," said the shepherd, "I will not go." See now,' added our informant, 'he would not leave his country.'

Though I would not consult 'Murray,' yet I was anxious to know what I could about the state of the country; and by dint of asking questions I found out that in Nassau there are no large proprietors. In the hollows of the hills, or perched on some barren mound, are villages—little towns rather, for they have not the pleasant pastoral qualities of a village. To these Dorfs belong the surrounding districts; the land is parcelled out to the peasants who inhabit them, and by them cultivated, each after his own idea of the profitable. All are equally poor, all equally little enlightened; no improvement, no enrichment of the country is possible. They are a lean, ugly race, brown-skinned and light-haired, with small intelligence in their countenance but perforce a certain amount of knowledge in their heads, Government strictly enforcing at least a certain quantity of learning on each child born in the Nassau land.

They have a great idea of begging. My niece declares that the *sole* garment of the children consists in a pocket, wherein stray kreutzers from the benevolent visitors are to be deposited; and the usual greeting of the country women as they passed us on the road was, 'Ah! bestow somewhat on me,' uttered in as careless and indifferent a tone as if it had been 'Good day to you.' All this and much more we learnt in the excursions we made from Schwalbach.

The tariff of carriage-fares mentioned the existence of a pony-carriage; and so, to please my niece Lydia, I commanded that the pony-carriage should be in readiness one afternoon to convey us to Hohenstein.

With great pride the driver, who was fully as big as his steed, told us that the whole vehicle was composed

and executed by himself, of his own unaided genius, and how the aristocracy of Schwalbach considered it, and justly so, a masterpiece. To squeeze ourselves into it was another *chef-d'œuvre*; and no sooner were we placed than, uttering an unearthly sound, our Jehu struck the short tail of the pony with a still shorter whip, and we set off—jolting, jumping, and hurrying over the uneven stones in such a style that, between laughing and holding on, we had quite a pain in our sides.

The ruin of Hohenstein, which we were on our way to visit, proved to be an old castle in the usual position—a steep declivity on three sides, with a stony stream at the bottom, and a coffee garden in the middle of the court. We found three German ladies, in short sleeves and brown hats, eating 'butterbrod,' and doing worsted work, with their backs to the view, as placidly as if they had been at home. Two students were smoking pipes and drinking beer; and an Englishwoman, in blue spectacles, was sketching the wall on pink and yellow tinted paper, with a penknife to scratch out the lights. The paper was meant to represent a sunset, and she was looking due east—but that did not seem to matter to her.

We made the proper deductions from what we saw—that it was thus very old,' 'had probably belonged to somebody, and that it was like some dozen other German castles that we had already seen.'

On our return to the outer gate we found our old Jehu quarrelling with the gate-keeper. A carriage with two meek post-horses was there. Our pony, a gregarious animal, had made acquaintance, by means of its nose, with the nose of the nearest meek one. Our driver fiercely struck the poor nose that sought sympathy with the post-horse, and the benevolent gate-keeper had interposed.

'Strike him not, thou! Why should he not speak if he will?'

'Hold thy mouth, thou! He would have made a spring next!'

'Nay, then—he is a pious brute!'

'I am older than thou—I will do as I please!'

The last words were said in such a tone that we were glad to get into our chariot, and be driven off the scene of combat.

CONCERNING TABLE-NAPKINS.

The very day after we had learnt the strong-minded patriotism of the shepherd who would not leave his country, we were made aware that in a small dining-room of the hotel a sight was to be seen—a sight bearing a moral with it. We, together with many others, peeped in, and on a round table we beheld an array of table-napkins curiously and wonderfully arranged, each in a different and intricate form, gracing a dinner service of knives, forks, and glasses, such as are prepared for an ordinary repast. Gazing on his handiwork with a modest consciousness, stood the dumpy, pale-faced little waiter whose genius had composed, whose deft fingers had concocted, those napkin trophies.

And now for the moral. A Russian—we know not if it was *the* Russian—seeing those napkins, had on the spot engaged that waiter for an untold sum to follow him to Russia, and become major-domo over all the napkins of his princely establishment. The waiter—dreading the burden on his conscience of ill-folded Slavonic table-napkins for ever after if he refused to comply—had accepted the offer, and now stood, a living example to all other waiters of what may be done by genius—even in napery.

CONCERNING SCHLENGENBAD.

I don't know that I ever prided myself especially on my good looks—rather the reverse; but I did feel, when I read and heard of the wonderful cosmetic baths of Schlengenbad, that, supposing I were to take them, and supposing they were to have the wonderful effect on my outward man, you know, how nice it

would be! My niece, Lydia, was bent on going—not that she cared, of course, for her complexion—but 'they said it was so soothing, so admirable for the nerves after Schwalbach'—N.B. It is the correct thing to have 'nerves' at Schwalbach—'And the *table d'hôte* is so good,' said B.; so we packed up, and hired an einspanner—a modest one-horse vehicle—and bidding adieu to my dear bubbles, and to Captain Grand their controller, we left the valley of swallows and its invigorating springs.

The pretty wooded site of Schlengenbad, its handsome buildings nestling under the great groves of lime and elm trees at the base of its hills, and the bright colours of its trellises of Virginian creeper, impressed me most favourably; the *table d'hôte* exceeded even B.'s description; but the baths! are—a—Humbug—yes, a humbug. It relieves my mind to say so.

I entered the clear bluish water Full of Faith; I did all that the most believing, the most hopeful, could do. I had counted the freckles on my hands, and on the only part of my nose where I can count them. We shall see, thought I, whether there is even *one* left when I get out. Will it be credited that when, after my *third* bath, I again counted the freckles, the number was intact—they were all there! Judge if I was disgusted. A little book had said I should be '*amoureux de moi-même*.' I did not find the sincere regard that I always have felt for myself one bit increased or warmed. On the contrary, I regarded myself as a stupid old fellow who had been sold. It gave me quite a shock.

An reste, they are very nice warm baths, and seem to do some people good, in the way that any warm bath may do. I do not say they soothed my nerves; but then I am not quite sure that I had any to soothe.

THE ORDEAL FOR WIVES.

CHAPTER XXV.

FOREWARNED.

DOES not some horrid realistic Frenchman, but one who understands the anatomy of such things, say that every present lover has at least twenty chances to one in his favour against every absent one?

These mean little Gallican aphorisms have not an exalting effect in the view they give one generally of human character; but their philosophy contains an undeniably large amount of truth in most matters pertaining to love. Esther Fleming, loyal, honest-hearted, and upright as she was in all other dealings of her life—Esther Fleming found, at the end of scarce another ten days, that her whole heart was becoming wrapt up in Paul; that at one accustomed hour of the afternoon her ear listened greedily for his well-known knock; that her life was very blank from the time when he left upon one day until her hand was again in his the next; and that the very thought of writing her letter to Malta was an exertion not to be contemplated without fatigue, almost—but this she did not yet acknowledge—with positive and strong repugnance.

Of course if Paul had been absent and Oliver present it would have been otherwise. Paul, grave, reticent, intellectual, was precisely a man of whom Esther's girlish imagination could have made much in absence, while poor Oliver was very much more favourably represented by his own handsome, lively, open-hearted presence than by any of Esther's lonely thoughts concerning him and his own undeniably commonplace although affectionate letters when he was away. As things came to her, however, Paul visiting her daily, Oliver writing once a fortnight ill-spelt narrations of his Malta gaieties and his unchangeable passion for herself, how was Miss Fleming to be saved from the horrible crime of seeing that she had

made a great, an irrevocable error upon the threshold of her life?

Such matters are *not* in young women's own keeping, whatever some amiable readers of mild fiction may require one to say. It is a pleasing sentiment that first love is the best, deepest, holiest of all our lives; that when a girl of eighteen shall have 'once said 'I love,' her dictum is to be immutable as that of the Medes and Persians.

But like many other pleasing sentiments, the common experience of common every-day life contradicts it flatly.

The first love of most very young men and women is an inflated, artificial, shallow mistake, and it is well, exceeding well for them when the mistake culminates in infidelity, not marriage.

I hold Esther Fleming to be quite above the standard or conventional type of young lady: her love for Oliver to have been quite above the ordinary type of young lady first love; and yet it was but counterfeit, base coin, an image, a faint echo of the genuine abiding strong passion of which her largely-endowed nature was capable.

Real love needs time and space for development. If Esther had seen Paul first at Countisbury she would probably have felt for him what she had felt for Oliver, only time would have ripened the crude fruit into maturity, sentiment into passion. As it was, fate destined her to imagine in one man what she was subsequently to find realized in another, and I rather think that Paul was not a loser by the circumstance. A sudden passion, struggled against and argued with, is apt to be stronger than one gradually unfolding itself, in the common course of things, out of the half-friendly, half-romantic beatitudes of a mild first love.

But these heresies, I beg distinctly

to say, are mine, not Esther Fleming's. Esther had the most perfect belief in all the recognized platitudes concerning the impossibility of caring for anybody twice in one's life, the most thorough horror for people who changed. If she sinned she did not attempt to call her sin virtue. If she, pledged to one man, was growing passionately to love another, she recoiled with repugnance from her own frailty.

And Paul saw that it was so.

Paul saw what combat was passing in the girl's heart; Paul knew, although she had never told him so in words, that Esther Fleming was engaged to marry a man she did not love, and that already, yes already, her face lightened at his, Paul Chichester's, coming; her hand trembled when he held it; her breath faltered and sank as they sat alone together, day after day, in Mrs. Tudor's drawing-room in the dangerous trembling half-light of the winter afternoon.

Did he act honourably in thus coming daily to see her? You must judge him in that, reader. I know that he acted humanly, which is perhaps about as much as one can expect from most men. His life was, and had been for years, a sterile life, lighted by only one affection, and that an affection which withheld him from all other love, from honest and legitimate love the most. Without having conceived anything of actual passion for Esther Fleming, he liked her extremely; and it is pleasant, though one knows it cannot end in much good, to see a handsome young cheek flush, and dark eyes light at one's coming. And she would soon forget him when he was gone, he hoped (he did not hope so in the least, be it understood, but he said to his conscience that he did), and then, no doubt, her fancy would go back, poor child! to its allegiance. And if there *was* any danger in his frequent visits, surely her natural protector, Mrs. Tudor, would be sensible of it, and forbid him to come, which she had not done.

I say he acted humanly, and precisely as I myself would have done; first in coming to see Esther, and afterwards in employing all these small

casuistries to set his own misgiving at rest. But at the same time I respect you immensely for thinking otherwise, and I hope when you are, some time, placed in a like position to my hero's—for Paul is my hero—that you will fully carry all your fine Spartan principles into practice.

Whatever her danger, Esther was in no lack of friendly fingers to point it out to her. Mrs. Tudor was a great deal too worldly wise to forbid Paul the house, or indeed to put any outward or visible check upon their growing intimacy: such weak preventive measures were wholly opposed to her straightforward, Napoleonic way of attaining her end. 'Thrown too much together? stuff and nonsense, Whitty!' she replied, when Whitty once ventured to suggest, as she often did to Esther herself, that the girl's peace of mind might be imperilled. 'Nothing is so ridiculous to me as to hear elderly people talk that kind of sentimental twaddle. If a young woman has been honestly brought up, and comes of an honest stock, like my niece, her principles can't be endangered, I imagine, by Mr. Chichester's or any other man's handsome face. What then? her heart? Bah! her heart must grow stouter if she is to live in the world, not a convent. She may see just as much of Mr. Chichester as she pleases. Nothing is better for forming a young person's character than receiving in moderation the attentions of an educated and handsome man whom she knows she cannot marry. It increases her sense of her own strength, and does away, too, with the ridiculous school-girl folly of considering herself in love with every man who is commonly civil to her.'

'I know you to be no fool, child, and so I let you receive Mr. Chichester alone,' she would say to Esther, in her curt, crushing way, of an evening after Paul had been there. 'Paul Chichester's fortunes are as broken as his coat is threadbare, and he comes of a family in which those who are not mad are spendthrifts; but Paul Chichester himself is an undeniably agreeable person. Get him to read Italian to

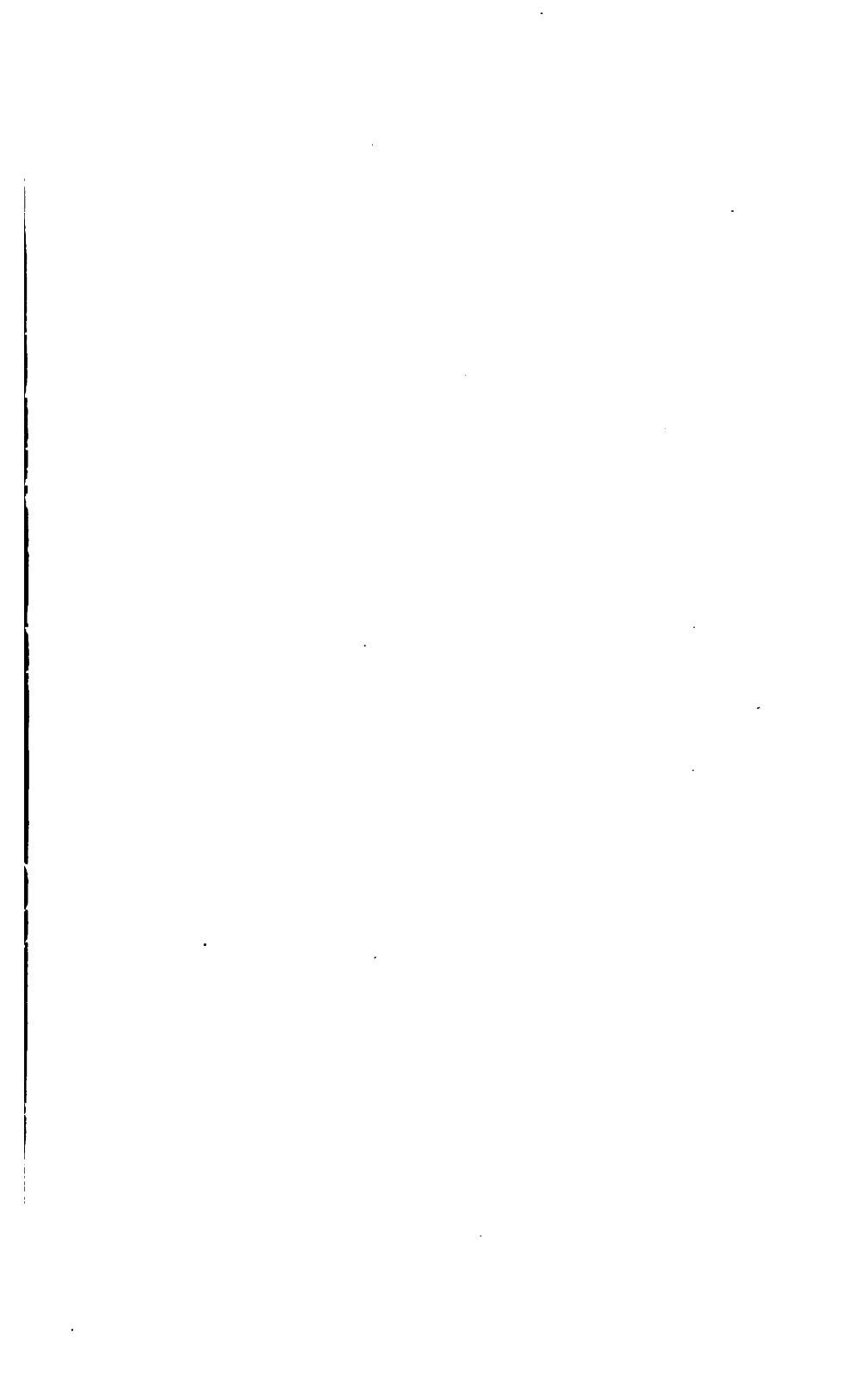




Drawn by M. Ellen Edwards.

GONE!

See "The Ordeal for Wives," Chapter XXVI.



you again, my love, by all means ; it is an improving exercise, and his accent is first-rate.'

And if the girl's fancy had only been aroused, her heart untouched, there was a tone in the bland, half-pitying praise which would have damaged a lover's cause a vast deal more than putting him out at the house door and forbidding him ever to cross the threshold again.

Jane Dashwood, too ('twas but human nature she should do so), pointed out with vigilance to her friend the false position in which any woman must place herself who should become seriously attached to Paul. He was poor ; his means, however derived—and even that was a mystery—were precarious ; his temper was fitful, even to eccentricity ; he made scarcely any secret as to the existence of a tie which withheld him alike from society and from the possibility of marrying. Mrs. Strangways, who had been intimate with some connection of his in London, knew for a fact that there was something more than commonly suspicious about his way of life. He did not even give people with whom he was most intimate his real address. Sometimes they would hear nothing of him for a month together. Sometimes he would be seen occupying a stall at the Opera during four or five consecutive weeks ; at others would be recognized walking in some remote suburb of London, dressed—well, worse, much, than she, Jane Dashwood, had ever seen him, and with a person, yes, *a person*, Esther, actually leaning in broad daylight upon his arm. Was he, could he be a man on whom it would be anything less than midsummer madness to place one's affections ?

And the more Miss Whitty warned, and Mrs. Tudor sneered, and Jane Dashwood reasoned, the more did Esther Fleming's heart become bound up in Paul. 'Tis only the poor emasculated love of artificial natures that will ever be influenced from without. The robust love of a healthy organization can assimilate praise and dispraise of its object, just as they come, and derive equal nourishment to itself from either.

CHAPTER XXVI.

GONE !

'This is my last evening, Miss Fleming. To-morrow I go back to London and to work. Well, I shall be better for my holiday—the nearest approach to a real holiday that I have had during the last nine years.'

Paul had come to take his leave ; and, Mrs. Tudor not having returned yet from her drive, Esther, very nervous and uncertain in her voice, was receiving him alone, and trying to be as unconcernedly lively and commonplace as she could.

'I wonder whether you are really as hard-worked as you say, Mr. Chichester. Do you know at times I think you *are* a grand seigneur in disguise, a Rothschild, as Milly said when she was talking to you about the flowers that day on the hill—do you remember ?'

Paul's face grew dark.

'I remember well, Miss Fleming. I am not likely to forget ; and you do right, very right, to remind me of it now. God knows it's seldom I forget what I am and what my bondage is ; but with you I *have* forgotten it—yes, Esther, for the last three weeks I have let myself dream of what my life, differently ordered, might have been.'

He came close to her, and looked with a long, with a painfully eager gaze into her eyes.

'For a short time longer, Esther, a short half-hour, at most, don't waken me ! don't speak of—of the mission you saw me on that bitter morning. It was a mission wholly unconnected with you, child—a mission which, in fact, cuts me off from you, and everything else in the world worth living for. Esther, let me look at you ! So, turn your face round to the window so that the light from the lamps may rest on it. I like to look at you.' I like to take in all I can of your face to-night—the last night, most likely, that you and I will ever meet while we live.'

Esther was accustomed to Paul's abrupt transitions of spirits, to the fits of fearful depression that were wont to come upon him without a

moment's warning and without tangible cause; but she had never heard him speak, had never seen him look, as he did now; and all her heart came into her voice as she strove to give him some indifferent answer. Indifferent, when she yearned to comfort him! to bid him tell her what burthen it was that darkened his life and let her share it with him, and soften it by her tenderest sympathy!

'I don't think you need speak so seriously, Mr. Chichester. Why should we not meet again after to-night? I may come to stay in Bath with my aunt Thalia again, and meet you as I have done now.'

'You will not stay with Mrs. Tudor when you are married, and I should not care to meet you even if I could do so. Our parting is to-night.'

She turned from him; she clasped her hands with a quick impatient gesture that did not escape Paul's notice.

'You may marry, too, Mr. Chichester. I was speaking of what is likely to happen—not of bare probabilities.'

'Your marriage is not a bare probability, Esther'—he fell into this way of calling her by her Christian name with a perfect naturalness that made it impossible for her to notice it. 'Be frank, for the very short time that we shall see each other now. You are as certainly engaged to marry as I am bound—hand and foot, soul and body—never to change from the state in which I now am. Tell me that it is so. I think you may show that poor degree of confidence in me before we part. Tell me the truth. I can bear it better than you think.'

'I—I——' but then Miss Fleming broke down.

'Go on,' said Paul, and forgetting, I suppose, what he did, he took her hands into his. 'Look upon me as a very old friend and brother, and let me hear your secret.'

'I have been engaged, Mr. Chichester, I have promised to marry a good and honest man, to marry him, and he is away, and if I had been worthy of his love I should have never changed—God help me, as I

have changed within the last few weeks!'

She brought out the first part of this confession very firm and resolute and decided; but at the last few words her voice faltered again, and Paul felt that the hands he held turned fearfully cold and clammy.

'Esther, do you know that this is a moment of fierce temptation to me?' he whispered. 'Do you know that if I listened to what my own heart is prompting me I would say, "Love me and be mine, and let us go to the other end of the world, and forget duty and law and sternest misery in our love for one another!"'

'Oh, Mr. Chichester! oh, sir, you frighten me!' and she drew her cold hands away from his. 'I don't think I have given you any right to say such things to me.'

'Esther, I don't say them. I only tell you what I should say if I listened to the voice of the tempter. As it is'—he walked a step or two away from her, in his abrupt way, and his voice suddenly seemed to lose all its new-found warmth and tenderness—'as it is, I will tell you the real truth about our relative positions. Don't be afraid. You will hear no more nonsense—no more about flying to the other end of the world and forgetting duty and everything else in each other. I am going to say one or two plain truths in a very plain way. And about you, first, Esther—you forgive me this one evening for calling you so? You are very young, you are very ignorant of life, ignorant of yourself, even, and of the reality of your own feelings. You think you like me a little, just at present. . . . No, don't be indignant; hear me out, and you won't accuse me of overmuch vanity! Your kind child's heart warms to me because I wear a threadbare coat and because some subtle instinct tells you that my life is a miserable one. You have known very few people hitherto; none, probably, with a threadbare coat and a general suspicion of ill-fortune like mine; and so, for the time being, you have made a hero out of me—a hero of poverty, *bien entendu*! Well, Esther, in six months—in six

weeks more likely—you will look back and remember Mr. Paul Chichester as he really was, and you will know that your heart has never swerved from its first faith, and in time you will marry, and——

‘I have heard enough of myself and of my own feelings,’ interrupted Esther, hotly. ‘If you knew me better, Mr. Chichester, you would not speak like this. I am not so weak and childish as you think!’

She looked handsomer than he had ever seen her, in her flush of indignation, half outraged pride, half wounded tenderness that he should rate her love so low. But Paul dared not—no, for his life he dared not say a word to lead her on to deeper confession. With all his strength of will could he withstand those quivering scarlet lips if they confessed—there, close beside him in the twilight! that her feeling for him was not the passing, romantic fancy of a child?

‘I have told you your position, Esther, and you are not pleased with me, now I will tell you mine; there will be nothing in that that can, by possibility, offend you. I am—don’t turn your face away; the half-hour is going fast—I am a man of already almost middle age, a man who, even in his youth, had no share in the common pleasures and feelings of other ordinary lives. I am bound, Esther, fast bound, to a hard and colourless lot, from which there is neither hope nor possibility of my ever being set free. Till about a year ago I never went beyond the duties every day brought to me. I resigned myself with the kind of patience that is less virtue than indifference to absolute solitude, absolute forgetfulness of the world I knew when I was a boy—the world of educated men and women. Then, chance would have it so, I suppose, I came across Mrs. Strangways in London. She was introduced to me by some old friend of mine, almost the only friend of my youth whom I still know, and asked me, from caprice, no doubt, to her house, where I first saw Jane Dashwood. Shall I tell you the rest? Shall I tell you—after playing out Jane’s *petite comédie* with only

a feeling of passing amusement—all that the last few weeks have made me really feel?’

She stood perfectly silent. She could not meet his earnest eyes. She could not trust her voice to speak.

‘The last few weeks have made me feel that I am human again, Esther. I had quite forgotten what it was to feel so, and I think it is wholesome to be brought back—however sharp the after-suffering—to a knowledge of what God originally intended me to be. I know that, placed altogether differently, and if I had met you when both were free, I would have asked you to be my wife, and we should have worked out the rest of our life together well. Esther, don’t grudge me the good you have done me! It won’t harm you, it won’t harm your husband, for you to think, some day, “I once knew Paul Chichester—a poor devil against whom life went hard—and for three weeks or so I let him see me and waste his foolish heart upon me daily, while I—well, I was very young, a dreaming romantic girl, and his poverty and his misery touched me, and I thought I rather liked him, and was glad of his society, for the time being.” This won’t injure you, Esther. Imagine—but you scarcely can, for you don’t, in the least, know what my life is—imagine what it will be for me, through the long dark years that lie before me till I die, to look back and say, “One pure and noble and unselfish woman’s heart took an interest in me, once. I have lived: for three weeks—out of how many blank and desolate years! Esther Fleming cared for me!”’

The sound of his faltering voice, the sight of his agitated face, swept all shyness, all foregone resolves, from Esther’s heart. She knew only that she was standing there beside the man she passionately loved; listening to a farewell that she felt to be an eternal one.

‘I may seem light and childish to you, Mr. Chichester, but I am not so. I have made one great, one fearful mistake, but it will be my last. I shall not change again, re-

member! I tell you this, now that I am parting from you, and see if I do not keep my word!

'I pray God that, whatever your life is, it may be a happy one! Child—good-bye!'

He came close: a mighty, well-nigh irresistible impulse urged him to take her to his breast and let her bind herself to him by words from which she could not, hereafter, depart; let her promise that if she could not marry him she would, for his sake, remain single while she lived. He knew enough of her character to feel sure that, in a moment of exaltation like this, such a sacrifice would not be a whit too high for her to offer. And he felt that he was a man: with all a man's selfishness; all a man's natural horror at giving up the one thing he covets most to possess into the keeping of another!

It is good to think how human nature, in rare and exceptional cases, does sometimes shine forth.

Paul clasped Esther's hand closely, warmly—that he must do after what had passed between them—but he never raised it to his lips, never asked her for another promise than the one which she herself had in all innocence given him.

'He is of a mould too heroic,' cried the poor child's heart, when five minutes later she had watched Paul's figure fade in the distant street, and desolation had closed in upon her. 'He might at least have heard me out when I would have offered to give up all my life for him!'

And then she went up into her room and flung herself on her knees before heaven, and vowed, while she asked forgiveness for her infidelity to Oliver, that she would remain faithful to Paul Chichester until she died.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A BATH 'DRUM.'

But the new love did not set Miss Fleming free from the old engagement. When the next day came round, bringing with it Mrs. Tudor and her plans for Esther's worldly

advancement, and the Dashwoods with their small excitements and projects of immediate pleasure, and, worse than all, a long letter from poor David full of little home-news and generous kindly allusions to Oliver Carew: when the next day came, bringing with it the inevitable dull reaction that every-day life must bring after any strong and vivid emotion, Esther realized, almost with horror, the position into which that single half-hour's self-devotion and self-abandonment had betrayed her.

One thing alone was certain: she must break with Oliver Carew at once. Then rose the questions—what colouring could she give to her change of faith? and by what means could she communicate the fatal news which, for aught she knew to the contrary, was to ruin Mr. Carew's peace for ever.

In his last letter, received only two days before Paul left, he had bidden her write to him no more at Malta. He had just heard of the dangerous illness of his uncle, and, in all probability, would have to return to England by the next mail. After this could she venture to send a letter containing intelligence so delicate addressed only 'to Oliver Carew, Esq., Poste Restante, Valletta,' as all her former letters to him had been directed? He might come to England, then; might be in England now, on his way to Bath to see her; and looking into his eyes and witnessing his desolation, she would have to tell him that she loved him no longer, had transferred her love to another man—a man, too, who had not sought her, and whom as long as she lived she could never marry.

The thought that she might at any moment see Oliver thus weighed upon Esther's spirit like a continual nightmare. She grew pale and thin; she started at every knock that came to Mrs. Tudor's door; at every step, almost, that she heard upon the stairs. Waking or sleeping, two faces were ever before her. One, pale and shaken with agitation, telling her of a love that must begin and finish with its first avowal, the other, flushed with life and

hope, returning to claim the promises, every one of which her heart had already broken.

'I don't think your visit here has done you any good, child,' said Mrs. Tudor, sharply, one evening. They were sitting together, dressed, ready to start for a party at the Dashwoods. 'You are looking white, and old, Esther; are you fool enough to be fretting about Paul Chichester?'

Esther was kneeling before the fire, gazing abstractedly among the fantastic forms of its changing embers, and still tracing Paul's features or Oliver's in every momentary shape that they assumed. At the sound of Mrs. Tudor's voice she turned round suddenly.

'Aunt Thalia, you frightened me. I was thinking of Paul Chichester, though not in the kind of way that you mean. I am not fool enough for that.'

'You are right, child. Chichester has no money. Whoever marries to poverty is a fool, and remember—remember this always, remember that I told you so to-night—you have a life of poverty before you, Esther. You understand me?'

'Perfectly. I have known it ever since I could understand anything. Joan has brought me up with no other idea.'

'Of course, of course, she has done right;' but Mrs. Tudor did not look in her great-niece's face, and her hand shook more than ordinarily as she applied herself to the buttoning of her glove; 'I never misled Joan nor any one of them. You mind that, girl, whatever they try hereafter to say to you about me, I never misled them and I don't mislead you now. Your life will be one of poverty. You must look out for a man with money, and, although I give you credit for too much sense ever to love any man better than yourself, I tell you that I consider you allowed Paul Chichester's attentions to go too far. Nothing disgusts a man with money like seeing one of those meaningless flirtations that you have been carrying on now.'

'But there is no man with money to be disgusted,' said Esther, with

rather a forced laugh. 'Who has there been in Bath to care whether I have talked to Mr. Chichester or not?'

'There are always men with money everywhere,' said Mrs. Tudor, peevishly. 'Young Langton was quite disposed to talk to you at the Rooms on Monday, but you had neither ears nor eyes for anything but that poor miserable poverty-struck Chichester.'

'Aunt Thalia, if Mr. Langton had a million a year I wouldn't marry him! I have a pair of useful hands—I have stout broad shoulders. I can work. The prospect of poverty has no terrors for me!'

Mrs. Tudor looked at the girl's face, strong and self-reliant even in its pallor, and her heart yearned towards her.

Before the great change comes, have you not seen how old people go back—drawn, God knows by what mysterious cords, to the habits and feelings of their childhood? An old French emigré I knew came down a week or two ago to breakfast and spoke to his servants and children, for the first time they had ever heard him, in the long-forgotten patois that his foreign nurses had talked to him, well-nigh a century before. By noonday he was dead; borne away by a stroke seemingly as painless as the sleep which had, in those long-buried days, overcome him in his nurse's arms. During the last three or four days Mrs. Tudor had become at once softened and harsher in her bearing to those about her; had dared, openly, to scold Mistress Wilson; had actually given a brooch to Whitty, a garnet one of little value (but think of Mrs. Tudor giving anything concerning which there was no pet parson or physician to stand as recording angel); had alternately lectured and caressed Esther in a manner wholly different to the usual well-bred indifference with which she treated relations.

No softening or Christian principle, no mysterious foreknowledge of death acting upon her conscience, changed Mrs. Tudor thus, I think. In her extreme youth, before the apprenticeship of a mercenary mar-

riage had first begun to train her for the life of the world, she had been impulsive, almost generous; and these long-extinct and most unprofitable habits were coming back now, mechanically, without will, without knowledge of hers, just like the old French emigré's long-forgotten patois.

'You have the blood of our race in your veins, Esther,' and she actually stooped forward and leant her inert, automaton-like hand for one instant upon the girl's. 'The Fleming blood in your veins, and the Fleming courage in your heart. Garratt's son was the only one bearing the name who had no spirit, and he was a Mortimer, mind, a Mortimer in face and in heart. If your grandfather had never seen Honoria Mortimer, the poor whey-faced little innocent he took for his wife, he wouldn't have ended as he did. We were poor. I gave up my fine feelings. I didn't marry the man I thought I loved when I was sixteen, and see how I have ended, Esther, see how I have ended!'

Esther looked up almost with a shudder at the old figure, stuck round with the fashions of youth still, but with the great lustreless eyes staring, wan and piteous, from the shrunken withered face, which to-night no amount of rouge could keep from looking corpse-like. 'Yes, Aunt Thalia, I see how you have ended.'

'I have had comfort all my life, child, and society, and friends, and I've been able to give a great deal to others—my charity-books are on the left-hand side of my bureau: you will find every farthing I have given during the last five-and-twenty years written down each with its own date. I have kept up the name of the family, and been of use and good to the world, while Cecilia has mouldered her wretched life in poverty, and poor Garratt died, in the prime of his years, out of sheer debt, and shame, and want. They gave way to impulse, you see, to fine feeling! to love! They married beggars, and beggars they both became—while I—child, are you listening to me?'

'Aunt Thalia, I am listening.'

'I gave up *all*!' her weak shrill voice brought this word out almost with a shriek. '*All*! Youth, hope, love, the man I loved: and the sacrifice bore good fruits. He was handsome, Esther; I saw him first through the grille of the Convent des Sœurs Grises, when Cecilia and I were schoolgirls there. He came in the holidays to see Antoinette de Vismes, his sister, you know, by marriage, and we walked together in the summer evenings sous les tilleuls—sous les tilleuls, et il faisait si beau! Je portais toujours ma petite robe grise de pensionnaire, mais il me trouvait bien. Esther, child, what do you mean, sitting staring at me like that?' she interrupted herself, abruptly. 'I'm not ill—I never felt better in my life. Ring the bell for Wilson, no, I forgot, tap three times for Whitty. I have left my card-purse up-stairs, and she must go for it.'

Mrs. Tudor's face, that had softened, had almost looked young while her tongue had strayed back to the familiar days, the familiar scenes of her youth, was set into adamant by the time Whitty's deprecating step entered the room. She was wholly unsuspecting of *His* coming whose cold hand already gripped her fast, whose sure forerunners were these fitful resurrections from her long-dead youth! but she knew, dimly, that she had been speaking without her own will, and in a way that it was not common for her to speak, and she wished to efface the impression of her weakness from Esther's mind.

'There's sixpence short here, Whitty,' when the poor soul had fulfilled her errand like the good fawning spaniel that she was; 'sixpence short. 'Tis no use counting it again, Esther, I know perfectly what there was when I left it,' with a glance at Whitty. 'Oblige me by going up to Wilson, Miss Whitty, and ask her if she can find a sixpence for you upon the dressing-table or the floor of my room. The money's right, child,' she whispered to Esther when they were alone; 'but Whitty, out of her own wretched purse, will produce a sixpence sooner than anger me. How I hate sycophants!'

And Mrs. Tudor was right. She knew every turn of her follower's character well; could play upon all the baseness and littleness of that poor nature as upon an instrument. Very mild and apologetic Whitty came back with a sixpence. 'I found it in your left slipper, ma'am, such a curious place!'

And then the sixpence was dropped, with a grim smile and a hope that her honestly-restored property would bring her luck, into Mrs. Tudor's purse, and she and Esther proceeded down stairs to the carriage. It was the last piece of kindness or condescension that Miss Whitty was destined ever to receive at her patroness's hands!

During their drive to Colonel Dashwood's house Mrs. Tudor was quite herself, at her best in her withering remarks on Whitty's meanness, and her cool pleasantries as to the Dashwood family generally, and the set of people one was sure to meet in such a house.

I don't know whether the abrupt transition would have reassured Esther, if her fears had been once awakened concerning Mrs. Tudor's state. But, to say truth, Miss Fleming was in a condition when the mind refuses to give strong attention to any subject but one; when everything in the actual, tangible world is dream-like by the side of one eloquent voice that speaks, one warm and living hand that presses—in the imagination. Looking out into the lighted street as they drove along, she thought of no object upon which her eyes rested, thought of no word Mrs. Tudor was uttering, save with just sufficient mechanical attention to say 'yes' or 'no' as occasion demanded. All her heart was with Paul—Paul setting out again upon the dark and uncheered road of which he had told her; Paul thinking, perhaps, at this moment of her as of a flighty, romantic girl who had given her heart to him without his ever asking for such a gift—Paul who, however he might cloak the mystery over, was beyond all doubt bound hand and foot to another woman than her—even as she was still bound, in honour, to Oliver Carew.

'You look deplorably ill,' was Millicent Dashwood's friendly whisper to her when they entered. 'Even Jenny, with Arthur Peel gone back two whole days, doesn't pine as visibly as you do for Paul. Depend upon it, it's a mistake to regret any man, Esther! I never mean to do so as long as I live, and I'm not sure that I won't make John Alexander propose to me this evening. Anything to break the dulness of one of papa and Mrs. Dashwood's mixed parties. Look at the awful set of cautions round the room, listen to the awful silence that prevails already!'

A ball was a thing never given in the Dashwood house; Mrs. Dashwood considering such festivities too carnal, Colonel Dashwood too expensive. As the Miss Dashwoods were, however, invited to the houses of all the gay Bath people, and as the carnal-minded and the righteous can, on occasion, eat cold turkey and trifle at the same board, it was the custom of the family once during the winter to give a 'drum' to which every creature of their joint acquaintance was invited. From these 'drums' dancing was, as a matter of course, excluded: cards, however, were admitted—in the back drawing-room—and music, as a grand neutral territory, upon which the fastest young lady or the slowest curate can conscientiously meet, was the established entertainment of the night.

Those who are acquainted only with the quiet, well-bred stagnation of ordinary London 'At Homes' can form but a dim and partial notion of a provincial 'drum.' Everybody knows everybody else, by name and sight: everybody's set is at daggers drawn with all the other's sets: everybody is determined that no human power shall induce them to speak to anyone they don't wish to visit, in *that* house. Imagine such elements as Mrs. Strangeways, Mrs. Tudor, and about eight very low-churchmen and their wives, in the limited area of two small rooms! Whist, and an exceeding run of ill-luck and bad partners, occupied Mrs. Tudor's interest pretty well as the evening progressed,

and Mrs. Strangways, who never failed at eliciting some kind of homage out of some one, made an unhesitating dash at a very young curate, and in spite of the looks of half the elderly women of his flock, kept him at her side for the night. The two great leaders of the fast card, and the fast dancing sets were provided for: but what was to become of the remaining sixty-six people who filled the rooms? In vain were interminable relays of weak negus pushed round through the crowd by the solitary, indefatigable, hired waiter; in vain did supercilious tenors break down in impossible duets with nervous shrill-voiced sopranos; in vain did Jane and Milly exert themselves to bring together, morally, those sixty-six persons who, physically, were wedged into one inextricable sulky mass. All attempt at enlivenment was fruitless. It was the yearly Dashwood 'drum.' What did any one come for but to be sulky and speak to none of the dreadful people you always met at that house, and get away as soon after supper as was decently possible?

Esther Fleming, who had sat in one place thinking of Paul the whole night, was probably less bored than any other person present; but even in her state of semi-somnambulism it was impossible not to be sensible of extreme relief when she found herself driving along through the clear winter night again, free to look through the window into the

now dim-lighted streets, and to dream of Mr. Chichester still.

For the rest, her state of mind was on this particular night untroubled. She had not the faintest idea whether the Dashwoods' party had been a failure or success. She bore with unexampled meekness all Mrs. Tudor's sharp temper when they reached home, and the exhausted state of the card-purse was fully established. She gave no heed to Mrs. Tudor's ghastly face, to the deathly, clammy feel of the hand that touched, but never pressed hers as they bade each other good night.

What human being of eighteen, in the first and most intoxicating stage of love, ever took note of such small things as the failure of a friend's party, or the loss of a few pounds, and of a great deal of temper at whist, or of the ghastly whiteness of a face that shall be a corpse before morning?

We go from the world solitary as we come into it, as we live and suffer in it.

Esther Fleming went to her pillow to dream the rosy untruths from which to-morrow, like every succeeding day of her life, should wake her; Mrs. Tudor to the last vision she should know of diamonds and of hearts—of her present lonely luxury, and of the far-off summer evenings when she walked in the garden of the Paris convent '*dans ma petite robe grise de pensionnaire, et il me trouvait bien!*'



LONDON SOCIETY.

SEPTEMBER, 1864.

MISS MIDDLESEX ON THE MOORS,

TO MISS SARAH JANE MIDDLESEX, GREEN ELM GROVE COTTAGE,
BAYSWATER.



August —

Lodge of Donashuishluagnish.

ON'T attempt to pronounce it, dear; you will spoil the shape of your nose; but try to imagine your beloved Delia (in her new tartan gown and *the Balmorals*) sitting at a bare table in a low-roofed room, with very little inside it, save a smell of peat smoke; but the most wonderful and beautiful view in the world out of its windows.

As to our journey.—It was less adventurous and romantic than I would have desired. The impressions that I had brought ready-made with me were far more like Sir Walter Scott's Highlands than the reality. To tell the truth, I was asleep when we passed Edinburgh, Perth, and Stirling, and missed seeing the combat of the clan Chattan and

clan Khay on the Inch, and the frowning passes of the Grampians for which I had prepared myself. Not till we had passed Dunkeld, and had quitted the main road for a most precipitous and sterile route, did



we feel ourselves really in a new country, and even then my first feeling was one of disappointment. I looked in vain for kilted clansmen roving over the heather; for eagles' feathers and waving plaids. Dirty-white sheep, and stones without end, clothed the hill-sides, and the kilt—literally speaking—was only worn by the women that we encountered. It was dark when we reached this dear, unpronounceable little lodge. Charlie and Uncle Tom received us. I was in ecstasies with all I found here.

It is quite unlike anything near Bayswater. Heather everywhere, and hills all round. Heather, not like the pink thing one gets at 'Foster's' for wreaths, but tall knots, and knobs, of stiff, *stiff* brown and purple—most beautiful and glowing in colour at a distance, and terribly *scratchy* to walk on.

Not a tree anywhere. Aunt Jane was disconsolate at first—she called it a desert; but since she found cabbages and gooseberry bushes in the garden, and a pig-sty behind the kennel, she has taken courage, and says it is 'extremely rural.' The Lodge is a long, low building, rather like a shed—with very small rooms and very stiff doors—no staircase to the upper story, but a big ladder by which I mount to my bedroom. I chose of my own accord to have my room up there, and it feels, oh! so delightfully romantic to go up a ladder every evening—just like Romeo and Juliet—only, as the trap-door at the top is very small, I have great difficulty with my crinoline, which has twice refused to accompany me downwards, and nearly kept me suspended in mid-air all this morning. . . . I must postpone further description till I have given you a graphic account of our expedition to the Tilt Meeting, from which we have just returned, and where—dear Sarah Jane, I may as well tell you—I have lost my heart—lost it once and for ever. Charlie took us—Aunt Jane and me. We started early on Monday; Charlie wearing the kilt for the first time, and I, an eagle's feather in my hat, as like Flora Macdonald as possible.

After a long drive through the wildest country, we reached a great green field near Blair, just as a tremendous yelling of pipes announced the approach of the grand mufti and his suite; in other words, the Athole highlanders, headed by their noble chief.

Such a crowd there was!

Such carriages and coaches full. People on, in, and under them; and at a little distance from us, who but the Joneses! Yes, the Joneses of Hammersmith, and Emma in the old pink bonnet. Judge of my feelings!

Oh, Sarah Jane! there were highlanders everywhere! It was like Rob Roy and Waverley, and all Sir Walter's novels put together, and some of them (the Highlanders I mean) were exactly like the boy who plays the bagpipes in Edgware Road.

They strutted about, and swung themselves so grandly when they moved; but Charlie looked nicer than any, I thought, for his kilt was so long, and his knees so much whiter and smoother than theirs.

I was so overpowered by the pibrochs, and the tramping of armed men, that I scarcely know what I thought of it all; but I am sure it was astonishing and magnificent to a degree.

The games began directly, and were exactly like the pictures in the 'Illustrated News.' Highlanders dancing together on their tiptoes, and then throwing big sticks and stones about, and taking off nearly all their clothes. I was rather horrified, till I observed that those who undressed most completely were given the first prizes, after which I supposed it to be part of the exhibition.

A hideous noise went on all the time, subdued slightly by distance, and which they told me was a trial of pipe-playing—not the applause of the lower regions, as I suggested.

We saw an aristocratic lunch going on in the tent, towards mid-day; all the outsiders sat down on the grass to eat and drink, and so did we. It was most romantic, dear Sarah Jane. We had nothing to drink (Charlie having left the

ginger-beer in the carriage), and I was complaining of thirst, when a beautifully dressed person in purple and scarlet tartans, and buckles, and belts, and chains to no end, who was near us, came and offered me his sherry and water in a silver cup. At least I *thought* it had been sherry and water till I tasted it, and it was very polite of him all the same (and I daresay he took me for a real Scotchwoman from my eagle's feather), only it was whiskey and wa-

ter, and made me sneeze and cough so! and, he told us he was 'The Macshneishan,' and he made great friends with Charlie, and stayed by us all day.

I had been in alternate wonder and delight at all I saw, till at the end of the 'games,' when I was talking to The Macshneishan about 'Prince Charlie,' a great shouting and shrieking startled me. All the people were rushing past us, over us almost. The Macshneishan



jumped up, seized me by the arm. I found myself running as hard as I could, I knew not whither! One glance behind me showed what fearful cause I had to run! Half-naked savages, with hair and beards streaming in the wind, were flying after us, tearing over the ground with lightning speed!

Terror overcame me. I should have fallen, but for the arm of my gallant chieftain!

One moment after the air rung

with shouts of applause. The crowd stood still and clapped their hands.

They told me the cheering was for the winner of a race that had just been run. But, dear Sarah Jane, I do not, I cannot believe it. My firm conviction is (and Aunt Jane agrees with me), that the gallant conduct of The Macshneishan alone saved me from a too terrible fate, and that the danger once averted, it was judged wisest to pass over the incident in silence. These

fierce Highland clans must be gently dealt with. This is my idea and Aunt Jane's. At all events, dear, you will agree with me, in being thankful to Providence that in our country the men run in *sacks*, where there can be no doubt as to their intentions!

We returned to the inn. Aunt Jane and I tea-ed together on the top of my big box, for the hotel was so full that we had no sitting room. Charlie dined at the ordinary, and we heard shouts and stamping that shook the house, whenever a toast was given.

They are so enthusiastic, these dear highlanders!

At nine o'clock, Aunt Jane and I, duly equipped, descended to the ball-room, and were met by Charlie and my noble acquaintance of the morning, who claimed me for the first dance. I was just going to put my hand on his arm for a waltz when the pipes burst forth in a loud, discordant strain, and all the room with one accord began to hop and turn. I did not know what to do: I had learnt the Highland Fling years ago; but how to kick out one leg, when I had a long dress and a crinoline—

Opposite to me first danced my partner, and then another highlander, springing high into the air, and twirling his arms, and from time to time we all changed places at once. I was bewildered, and half despaired. Suddenly the tune changed, the dancers shouted, and I found my arm seized by the elbow, and spun round and round, till I was dizzy. My dear, they were dancing a Hoolachan! No wonder they give their dances odd names! I would have run off to Aunt Jane, if I could have escaped from the flying plaids and garters that surrounded me, and my relief was enormous when the noise stopped, and my chieftain, suddenly becoming calm and silent, took me to my seat.

What surprised me most during the evening was the extraordinary control these wild people exercised over themselves during the other dances. They quadrilled, they waltzed, they lanced as quietly as if they had never heard a bagpipe; but when a reel began, the

room shook with their leaping and shrieking.

I watched the ladies, who were as demure as their partners were excited, and I adopted their step before long. It is perfectly easy—only to shake your dress violently, and run from side to side, and at a change in the tune to run into the middle of your 'set,' and turn about so as to make as much confusion as possible. I will teach you when we come home, dear.

I saw Emma Jones, green with envy, because I danced with a real highlander; so I walked about as much as possible before her, arm-in-arm with him: was not that capital?

There was a great supper. We sat on the narrowest of benches, at long tables, and the *grandees* were placed according to rank, at the top of the room. I strained my neck to look at them, and after all they were much like other people, and not half so smart as Aunt Jane and myself (Aunt Jane wore the topazes, and I had my green-and-gold wreath, with two new lilac feathers.)

There were some long speeches, with thumpings and stampings of applause, and when the *healths* were drunk, all the gentlemen stood up on one leg on their seats, and put the other leg on the table, and sneezed violently.* It was a most exciting, I may say, a most terrible noise, and has doubtless some deep significance. Aunt Jane's feelings were too much for her. 'Delia,' she whispered across the table to me,—'Delia, I desire you will follow me, *directly*,' and she actually got up, and would have left the room, had not the foot of a gentleman on each side of her pinned her gown to the bench. 'It is most indecent,' she said, over, and over again, and put her fan up to her face, and spoke so loud, that I trembled lest the high-spirited mountaineers might hear and resent her speech. Luckily the noise was too great for the words to reach any ears but mine; and for my part, I only wished the ladies also might stand on the table. I was so ex-

* N.B.—Miss Middlesex probably alludes to the Highland toast—Neish—neish neesh—ha neish.

cited—quite *hors de moi*, as the French say.

Friday Evening.

DEAREST SARAH JANE,—I left off yesterday, in order to accompany Aunt Jane in a mountain ramble, and now—in a different, alas! far different frame of mind—I resume my pen. I have had a blow, a sad blow, Sarah Jane; but wait—I will begin at the beginning—you shall know all. Calmness may return to your agitated Delia, while she writes of the trivialities that preceded her bitter disappointment.

Unaccompanied by maid or footman (people walk *quite* alone in Scotland), we sat out; and after an hour's walking over hill and dale, found ourselves—we knew not where—opposite a small hovel or bothie.

Too tired to proceed further, or to return, Aunt Jane began to bemoan her fate, and I—with that confidence in the natives that the perusal of the 'Cottagers of Glenburnie' ever inspires, proposed that we should seek rest and shelter from the noonday sun, in the humble abode before us.

When I reached the aperture—there was no door—out rushed a howling trio of dogs, gaunt, hungry, bright-toothed dogs. Our shrieks, as we clung to each other, brought the mistress of the house to our rescue; an unlovely person, in scanty garments, who kicked the dogs off us, and uttered nasal sounds of oburgation to them and consolation to us, pointing a welcome to the bothie with her hand.

We were very tired, but the interior seemed so uninviting a mixture of darkness and dogs, that we declined entering, and sat on turf benches close to the door. Conversation was impossible, for our hostess could not speak English, and when I said 'Come-er-ashen-doo,' over and over again (that is the Gaelic phrase for a greeting), she only shook her head, and said, 'Noo, noo,' in melancholy tones not unlike those of her canine companions.

However, she was a good creature, and brought us a bowl full of the most delicious creamy milk, which greatly refreshed us, and for which she would receive no payment.

We were ready to retrace our steps, when it struck both Aunt Jane and me, that one hill looked so exactly like the other, that we had not the slightest idea by which hill-side to go, in order to reach home. Our perplexity interpreted itself to our hostess, who with gesticulations, and strange sounds, disappeared behind her house, and returned speedily followed by a grim, tall husband, with courtly manners and very black hair, who slowly, but in tolerable English, offered to show us the way to the Lodge. We accepted gratefully, and he strode beside us, along a sheep-trodden path in silence. It was not the route by which we had come; and we arrived presently at a broad, rapid, though shallow stream, full of rocks and pools. How were we to cross it? we had not even galoshes!

Aunt Jane and I reproached our cicerone.

'How in the world,' we said, 'are we to get over? we shall wet our feet!'

The Highlander looked earnestly at Aunt Jane, and put the little black pipe out of his mouth into his pocket, moved a step or two forward, and then without a word—but with a sudden dextrous toss—he hoisted her on his back, strode into the water (unheeding her frantic screams, and the clutches Auntie made at his throat and ears), and deposited her safe on the opposite shore.

I shuddered—in spite of my irrepressible laughter—when I thought that, in like manner, I must be shouldered and borne aloft by that grim knight; but Aunt Jane threatened from the other side to disinherit—to disown me, if I ventured to take off my shoes and stockings; and she adjured me by all I held most forcible to resign myself, and to hold tight. Well, dear, I *did*.

We were in the middle of the stream—he was in the act of stepping from one stone to another, when over his head, from my high position, I descried close to Aunt Jane—walking up to her in fact—a tall figure—a Highlander. Sarah Jane, it was The Macahneishan.

Had I not told you how, by a

strange coincidence, we discovered that his moor and ours were contiguous—marched together, as they say hereabouts? Had I told you that in the *tenderest* manner he had said, 'It would be no wonder if we were to meet again?' and now—to meet thus. What could I do? I screamed 'Let me go!' I kicked, I struggled, the shepherd tottered forward, and dropped me into a pool, clutching as long as he could at my petticoat. Can words describe the scene, or my feelings! There I stood, dripping, dragged; my hat floating round and round in a small whirlpool, beyond me; Aunt Jane scolding, and stretching her parasol at me; the shepherd with one hand outstretched to catch me, the other holding on to a bunch of heather on the bank! I will draw a veil over this too harrowing picture. Suffice it to say, I got out, and walked with streaming boots and a battered hat home to the Lodge.

And The Macahneishan!

My dear, The Macshneishan was *very rude*; he didn't attempt to help me; he laughed quite loud, and swung himself about, and was horrid! And only think what we have found out!—he is not a chief at all—he is a shopkeeper, 'a weaver boddie,' our shepherd told us, with great scorn; he has neither a clan, nor a castle, nor a badge, nor anything!

I have caught a dreadful cold in my head. My 'Balmorals' turn up at the toes like Chinese boots, and are quite spoilt, and I lost my eagle's feather. I have knocked all the skin off my knees, and broken my 'cage' with that nasty ladder. Charlie has got rheumatism from *wearing bare legs*, and Aunt Jane and I vote Bayswater far preferable to the Highlands.

Ever, dear Sarah Jane,
Your affectionate but saddened
DELLA MIDDLESEX.

ON THE CLIFFS BY THE SEA.

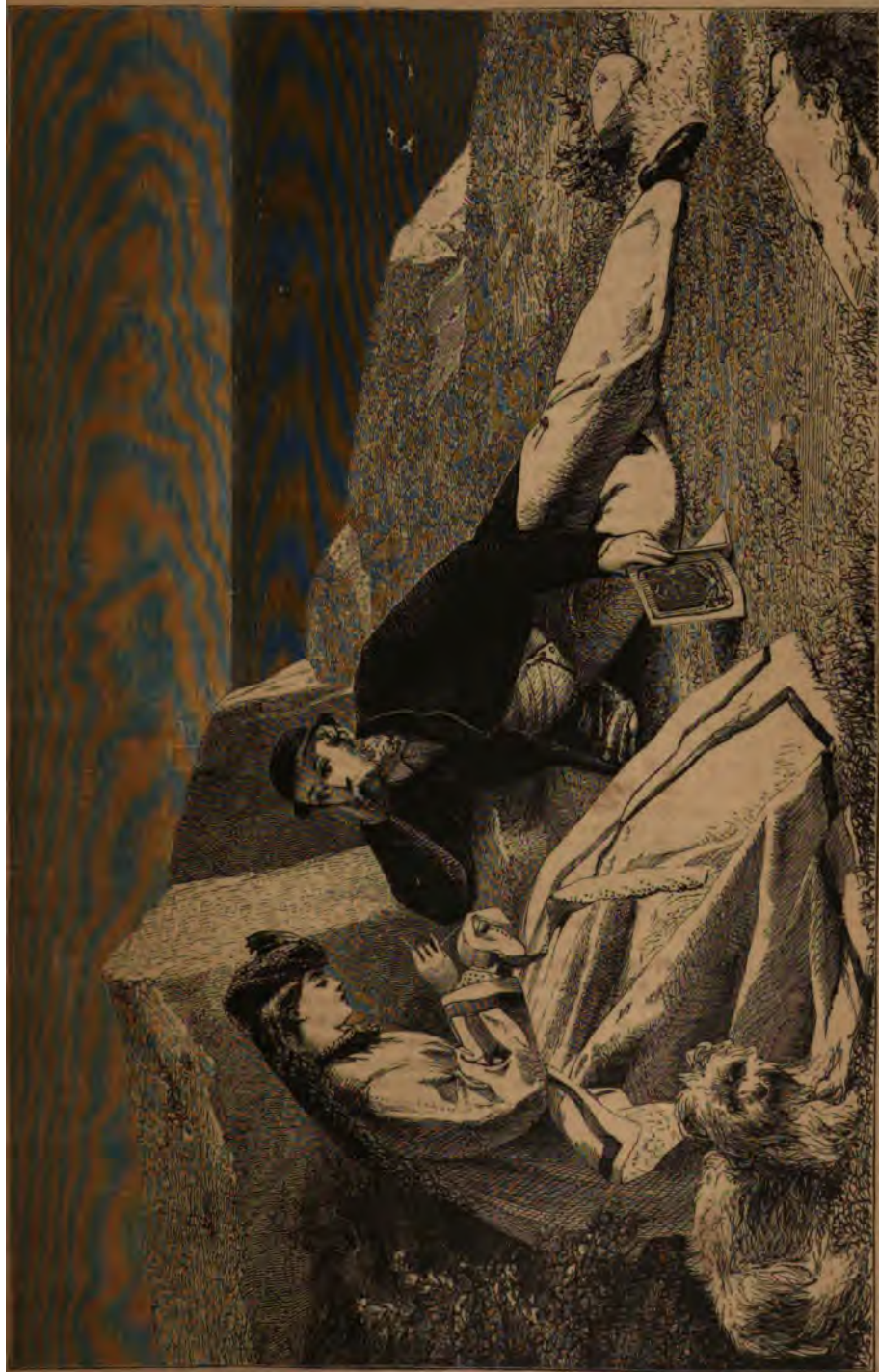
I.

IN the still hot noon not a Zephyr's stir
Made the grass on the cliff's edge nod,
Or waved the spires of the harebells blue,
That sprang from the velvet sod.
The tide stole on o'er the shore beneath,
By barely a ripple curled,
It seemed as Nature were holding her breath,
And we two were the two in the world—
As if we two were the two in the world,
And for us—and for us alone—
Were the deep clear sky, and the golden sun,
And the ocean's monotone:
For ever below at the foot of the cliff
In that still hot noon heard we
The plash of the wave—the dash of the wave—
The mystical melody—
The rush of the wave—the hush of the wave—
The ceaseless sound of the sea!

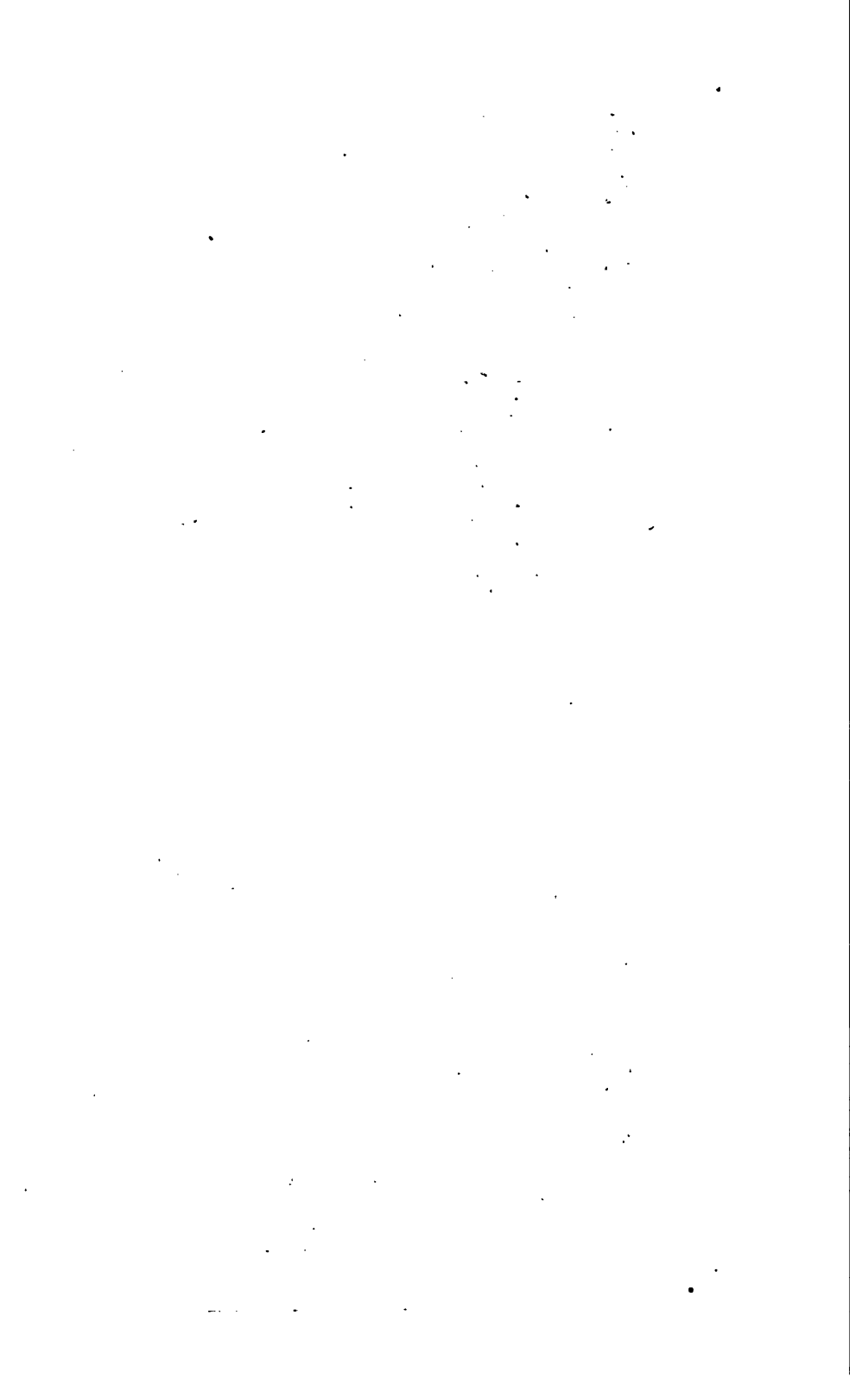
II.

Ah! pleasant it was, in a noonday dream,
O'er the oil-smooth deep to gaze,
Where the tremulous air in the broad bright glare
Wrapt all in a silver haze.
We thought of our distance, dawning dim
Through the future's purple mist:
And knew we could hear each other's hearts
If we only chose to list!
We had loved and waited—could wait, and love
With a love that knew no change,
Till the moment when Fate should join our hands:—
It was sweet—so sweet and strange!





ON THE CLIFFS BY THE SEA.



And ever, below at the foot of the cliff
In that still hot noon heard we
The plash of the wave—the dash of the wave—
The mystical melody—
The rush of the wave—the hush of the wave—
The ceaseless sound of the sea!

III.

For sea-birds, that flew to their nests on shore,
Yet circled, on pinions slow;—
And the homebound boats, with gleaming sails,
Tacked—gliding to and fro.
And we, whose course on that golden noon
To a haven of bliss was bent,
Yet hovered around the happy port,
And delayed with one consent!
I had my book, and you your work—
We sat on the white cliff's top,
And watched the blue shadows fly over the deep
And the sun to the westward drop;—
While ever below at the foot of the cliff
In that still hot noon heard we
The plash of the wave—the dash of the wave—
The mystical melody—
The rush of the wave—the hush of the wave—
The ceaseless sound of the sea!

IV.

But away to the left, and away to the right,
And before us—mile on mile—
From the water's rim to the distance dim,
Did the vast deep calmly smile.
It spread o'er the drowsy dreaming Earth,
A mantle of mystic tinge,
That heaved with the heave of her sleeping breast,
And twinkled a pearly fringe.
A stillness brooded o'er land and sea—
Scarce a whisper Ocean made:—
A calm so like the secret of Death
That we almost grew afraid,
As ever below at the foot of the cliff
In the still hot noon heard we
The plash of the wave—the dash of the wave—
The mystical melody—
The rush of the wave—the hush of the wave—
The ceaseless sound of the sea!

V.

And—passion swaying o'er heart and brain,
As the moon o'er the mighty tide—
We felt as the world had passed away,
And none were alive beside!
I closed the book, and you ceased the work,
And we gazed across the sea—
But all the while I was thinking of you,
And you were thinking of me!
And at length we turned, and my look met yours.—
'Do you love me?'—'Yes!' And then
Our hearts were mingled for life and death,
Ay!—never to part again,
So long as below at the foot of the cliff
By day and by night shall be
The plash of the wave—the dash of the wave—
The mystical melody—
The rush of the wave—the hush of the wave—
The ceaseless sound of the sea!

THE GREAT PRIZE.

A Story of the French Lotteries.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

I.

'WHY are you so comely, O Widow Le Blanc? Or rather, why is not my poor purse a little rounder and comelier, to match your own?' 'Tis fond of money you are, Widow Le Blanc, while I am wanting you to be fond of me. And you seriously mean to purchase tickets in the Grand St. Simple Lottery? If you should happen to win the Great Lot, will you have me then for your lawful husband? You can well afford to marry me now; I am sure you could afford to marry me with four thousand pounds additional.'

'What absurd nonsense! Don't talk such stuff! Do you think I shall ever marry again?'

'Certainly; you will probably marry me, else you wouldn't allow me to talk to you as I do. Just look at yourself in the glass, and tell me whether that charming face ought to wear widow's weeds for ever.'

'Get away with you, and promise to do what I ask you.'

'I will; but on the sole condition that on my return you fix the happy day.'

'Do you wish me to ring the bell, after the English fashion, and order the servant to show you the door?'

'A perfectly needless proceeding, dear friend. I know your door too well, both inside and out. But you may kindly walk with me across the lawn, as far as the gates of your pretty little park.'

'With pleasure. Antoine, whom you know, is once more out of work; and so I have taken him on again as an extra hand for a little while. He shall drive you into town. These are my orders. For the ten francs, which *voilà*, you will have the goodness to bring me back forty tickets.'

'Why need I go at all, instead of spending the afternoon with you? Could not Antoine fetch them quite as well as I can?'

'Impossible. I should not wish a creature besides yourself to be aware of my folly. It might also be a temptation to him, and lead him to risk money that he can very ill spare.'

'As if he were not tempted already! Where can he stir, which way can he turn, without stumbling on the offer of "One Hundred Thousand Francs for 25 centimes?" I am sick of the sight of the figures 25 and 100,000. They haunt

you, like the ghost of a tune which you cannot drive out of your head. In every newspaper there they are, in large characters amongst the advertisements, and in small type amidst the puffing paragraphs. They stare at you from every wall, from every shop window in every street. You see them even when you shut your eyes, like the image of the sun after trying to gaze at it. If a gossiping and sharp-sighted fellow like Antoine has not been tempted to buy lottery-tickets, he has passed the ordeal by a miracle. Four thousand pounds for twopence halfpenny is a temptation which is sure to attract a great many—a very great many—'

'Say simpletons, boldly, at once.'

The Widow Le Blanc and myself were country neighbours, residing, on the friendliest footing, about three miles out of an important French town, which we will here designate as Belpert. The widow was very much at her ease in her worldly affairs, and in every other respect; and she loved to surround herself with persons who pleased her, whatever might be their grade in life. One of this favoured few was your humble servant. Two still humbler *protégés* were a young married pair, the aforesaid Antoine, and his wife Louise—I don't think I ever heard their surnames mentioned. For me, they still remain Antoine and Louise, pure and simple, to this very day. The wife got up all the widow's linen—and it wasn't a little all—besides making herself generally useful. Louise had been Antoine's *bonne-amie*, or sweetheart, before he fell to the conscription. After serving his time in the army, he duly and truly married her. They were now a handsome, but hot-tempered couple, belonging to the class of lovers who can live neither with nor without each other. He was hasty, and she was jealous, whether with or without cause is no business of mine. Nevertheless, they might have shaken together into tolerable connubial harmony, but for the presence of a mother-in-law in their dwelling, stipulated before the marriage. The mother fought for all the daughter's 'rights' more fiercely than the daughter herself, especially for the French workwoman's right of keeping the common purse in her sole custody.

In person Louise is tall and buxom, with black hair, flashing eyes, and

richly-tinted skin. Antoine, of the middle height, is a model of herculean strength and activity, improved by military discipline. Since his return to peaceful employments he had been rather unsettled in his ways, following this occupation for two or three months, and that for the three months following. Be it observed, to lighten the reproach of unsteadiness, that the majority of French workmen, especially if they have served in the army, are more versatile, have more trades to their back than Englishmen belonging to the same class of society.

These changes of occupation were not diminished by their frequent domestic broils. When the house was too hot to hold the man, he naturally sought a cooler retreat and temporary work elsewhere. If their disputes were mentioned to the widow, she mostly took the husband's part, chiding Louise for her want

of tact and temper, and warning her of the probable consequences. She found him employment from time to time, and often confided to him missions which she would not trust to ordinary labourers. And a very useful polytechnic he really was. His campaigns had taught him numerous accomplishments—one of which was the faculty of winking, almost imperceptibly, with either eye, the rest of the countenance remaining impassive.

Thus it occurred that Antoine happened to have to drive me into Belpport, and to follow me about the town to carry my purchases. Amongst other places, we went to the bookseller's for some new publications expected from Paris. The literature in the window was half concealed by a drooping screen of lottery tickets, in long strips of several tickets each, displaying the everlasting and omnipresent 100,000 francs.

GRAND ST. SIMPLE LOTTERY,

AUTHORIZED FOR

THE WHOLE FRENCH EMPIRE.

CAPITAL, ONE MILLION FRANCS.

Public Drawing at the Hôtel de Ville, Carville, under Surveillance of Authority.

275 LOTS IN COIN, ALREADY PAID INTO THE BANK.

GROS LOT 100,000 FRANCS.

ONE LOT OF 10,000 FR.; TWO OF 5,000 FR.; ONE OF 3,000 FR.; AND
270 OF 100 FR.

No. * * *

*All Lots immediately
paid in Cash.*

*This Ticket gives a chance
of winning any Lot.*

Nor was this all. Not only were 100,000*fr.* to be had for 25 centimes, but the possibility was put that, by buying 275 tickets, their fortunate owner might win the whole 275 lots. And why not, if you please? What mathematical law exists which absolutely forbids the coincidence? Probabilities may be left out of the question, because probabilities are, of their very nature, uncertainties. The act of drawing is sure to be fairly conducted. The result is a matter of pure accident; and there is nothing to prevent accident from falling in one direction as well as another. Antoine read the magnificent promise, and gazed at the goodly show, which evidently brought the water into his mouth; but, through bashfulness, diffidence, and shame he said nothing, and did nothing.

There are two classes of lottery gamblers in France: those who indulge in

it openly, and those who indulge in the weakness by stealth. For my own part, I make no secret of such purchases. Why should I? The sums so expended are far too small to affect my means prejudicially. It is a perfectly homœopathic mode of gambling: you have the pleasure of play for almost nothing. But, for the vast majority, lottery tickets bear the same relation to the gambling-table that solitary drams do to the social drinking-bout. Millions of tickets disappear imperceptibly. Nobody knows how or whither they go; their owners never mention them. They are bought at dusk or at early morn by women with veils, muffled-up men, or children not old enough to spell the word 'lottery,' who are sent to fetch them by their elders. They go off by scores at a time, or by ones and twos. Who cannot find the means of obtaining a ticket costing perhaps five sous, or at most one franc?

After the clandestine purchase, to themselves are confined—with no one to witness them, confided to no sympathetic ear—their feverish hopes, their dreams of wealth, their castles in the air, their palpitating perusal of the published prize-lists, their disappointment when their venture turns out blank waste paper, and their unshaken belief that better luck will come one day or other, by-and-by. The imaginary riches in which they have been revelling for weeks are suddenly dissipated, to be mentally enjoyed, with equal sterility, at the earliest opportunity.

When my books were paid for and delivered to Antoine, I first bought my fair neighbour's forty tickets, and then speculated in twenty more on my own account, without affecting the slightest concealment. Antoine, beholding this, took courage—such is the force of example—and, drawing half a franc from his waistcoat pocket, said—

'It's what Louise has given me for my week's tobacco. But never mind—I must have one. *Somebody* must get the gros lot; why not I as well as another?'

'Keep your week's tobacco,' I interposed. 'Take a couple of my tickets, and welcome too. I have not the slightest expectation of winning, and hardly know what fancy makes me throw money in this way out of the window.'

'Monsieur is too good. I shall be depriving monsieur—'

'Of a bit of paper, with which you will light your pipe one of these days. Give me the scissors. Look, and tell me which you will have.'

'If I could only choose a good number!'

'All numbers are good until they are drawn, and then it is too late to choose. Take any slip of tickets you please, and I will cut you off a couple.'

He took one between his finger and thumb, and the scissors severed the two lower ones from mine. The generous sacrifice was made. Was I not presenting him, perhaps, with four thousand four hundred pounds sterling? Antoine put, until the day of drawing, the great and the second best lots in his pocket.

II.

Time passed, and I thought no more of my lottery tickets. I had stowed them away, after jotting down their numbers on a scrap of paper, which I stuck in an out-of-the-way corner of my portemonnaie. My visits to the widow continued as usual, on terms of increasing intimacy. Her manner was

invariably frank and friendly; still, to my great annoyance, I could not get her to fix the date of our projected wedding.

One morning when I called I found her studying the '*Journal des Debats*' with great attention.

'The *St. Simple* Lottery was drawn,' she said, 'the day before yesterday; and here is the list of the winning numbers.'

'And you have won——?'

'As usual, nothing. One singular circumstance has happened, which does not, I think, often occur. Two consecutive numbers have won two prizes: the first of the two has the great lot, the second a lot of one hundred francs. They are Nos. 3,384,406 and 3,384,407.'

'Let me look what chance I have,' I said, taking the scrap of paper from my portemonnaie. 'I have several tickets amongst the three millions and odd, which is a target, however, quite wide enough for me and many others to miss the mark. 3,4—; that won't do. 3,39—; nor that. 3,384,5—; nor that. 3,384,406! Hurrah! hurrah! By Jove, dear friend, the great lot is mine!'

'Is it really? You are not joking?' she asked, turning very red. 'No? Then I am very sorry for it, indeed. Great lots never bring good fortune. You will now think me interested, and that I take you at last for your money's sake. How can I marry, without feeling ashamed of myself, a man whose name will be advertised in every journal throughout all France as the winner of the gros lot? The position is ridiculous—detestable! I heartily wish you had not won it.'

'I don't. A hundred thousand francs can do no harm. They are honestly mine, awaiting my claim in the Carville Bank; and I shall go and pocket them without the slightest scruple. I have another piece of news to tell you. If I have the great lot, Antoine must have a lot of one hundred francs; for my winning ticket is the last remaining on the slip from which I cut him off a couple.'

'And so he was within an inch or two of having the great lot fall on his head! When do you go to receive the money?'

'The sooner the better. To-morrow, perhaps.'

'Very well; do so, by all means, and get it over. An idea strikes me. Antoine shall go with you, to take his money also. From Belpoit to Carville is only three hours by rail. You can easily go and return in one day. I will drive you into Belpoit early in the morning, and come and fetch you in

the evening. I shall order Antoine to meet you at the railway station. And pray take care of yourself. I will never buy another lottery ticket, for I begin to hate the very words "Gros Lot."

III.

Next morning, as had been agreed, we drove together into Belport. I bade my obliging widow good-bye, leaving her to transact her affairs in town, and walked to the station alone, where I found Antoine waiting, certainly, with military punctuality; but he was very different from the sober Antoine to whom I had given the lottery tickets. His cheek was flushed, his eyes sparkled, his cap was pushed back and cocked on one side, his waistcoat half unbuttoned. He was drunk, in short—not stupidly drunk, but excitedly drunk. He was haranguing a circle of laughing acquaintances—and Antoine knew everybody—in the rhetorical style known in France as *'blague'* or *chaff*. At my approach he stopped short, and joined me with a respectful salute.

'Antoine!' I said, in a tone and with a look of decided rebuke.

'I can't help it,' he answered with a gesture which implied 'I know what you mean, and I don't deny it.'—'I have had a dispute with Louise this morning; and after disputing with her, I must always drink. And it isn't the quantity which does it, then. When I am in a rage with her, a single glass of gin flies to my head; and this morning I was obliged to take two. She has been at me again about the old story. Her mother has told her that I ought to give her every sou of my lottery prize. They have already settled what they are to buy with it; I am to have cloth for a pantaloon. That's all.'

'I am very sorry for it; but your family quarrels are no business of mine, and you can't come with me in this condition.'

'Don't say that, Monsieur, I beg of you. Madame would never forgive me. This is nothing; it will soon pass away when once on the railway; and I promise you, Monsieur, that, the whole day long, I will drink nothing stronger than *café au lait*. A pantaloon for me! And all the rest for those women's fancies! *Sopressi!* No!—Monsieur, I like you; you are a *bon garçon*. Pardon the liberty; but let us sooner go on to Paris and spend it all, as if we were a couple of Crimean comrades.'

'I thank you. There is nothing I should like better, if you were rich enough to afford it. As it is, don't throw away your money like a fool. It

will be of use to you at home. Besides, what am I to do with my lot, while you are dragging me about from restaurants to theatres and *cafés chantants*?'

'That is true; but I may come with you now?'

'Yes, yes; but there is no time for talking. Go and get a couple of return third-class tickets for Carville, and behave as rationally as you can.'

A rapid wink of the eye conveyed both his appreciation of the advice and his promise to follow it.

I had fallen into the habit (when unaccompanied by ladies) of travelling in France third class by railway; not for cheapness—oh dear no! nothing of the kind; nobody ever thinks of economising—but for the sake of mixing with the people. So third class I went this time. Antoine had never travelled in any other. In a few minutes we had taken our places; the bell rang, and we were on the move.

A third-class railway carriage, in France, is a public room in which everybody may speak to everybody, without the form of an introduction. Whether the conversation be general or in groups, conversation there always is, and plenty of it. We were hardly out of the Belport station before somebody pulled from his pocket a newspaper with the list of the winning numbers. The lottery that had been drawn so lately could not help being the topic of the day. Who were the winners, was the leading point of interest. Not that people cared about the hundred-franc lots; their possession was regarded as a joke, and their holders held to be nicely disappointed; but the inquiries were pressing and eagerly curious as to who were the owners of the three thousand, the five thousand, the ten thousand, and, above all, the hundred thousand francs.

'You may say what you like,' Antoine gravely observed, 'but it's all luck.'

The novel observation that a lottery is all luck elicited a general smile.

Third-class travelling has its drawbacks, as well as its ease and economy. Your fellow-travellers are not warranted eligible. All is fish that the tide of locomotion sweeps into the third-class net. Clean or dirty, sober or drunk, *braves hommes* or *mauvais sujets*, the third-class carriage opens its capacious maw and takes them in indiscriminately. Sometimes you are thrown in the way of highly interesting and respectable characters; sometimes you find yourself side by side with the very reverse. The latter was destined to be our fate on the present occasion.

At the first small station out of Belport, a group of shabby workmen were waiting, who were put into the same carriage with ourselves, and in the next compartment to our own, so that, in fact, we were separated from them only by the backs of our seats. They were five in number, and exhaled an earthy smell which they soon covered and concentrated by striking their stinking lucifers and lighting their filthy pipes. They spoke French to each other, but with an accent and turn of phrase quite different to that of the neighbourhood. Antoine had his back to them, but I sat facing them. Their expression of countenance was animal, brutal. They reminded me of the noisome creatures described in Toussein's 'Analogies.' One, in particular, struck me as being a very two-legged fox. His red, shaggy hair, his unclean skin suggestive of stench, his small-pupilled and unsteady eyes, his sharp, cunning, restless features, were altogether vulpine. The other four were strong and stout. One had a ferret-like or blood-sucking look; the rest had more of the pig, the bull, and the jackass, than any other quadrupedal type about them. Their entry only interrupted the talk for a moment. They sent forth foul incense from their pipes and mouths, listening in silence to what was going on.

'It's all luck,' resumed Antoine, returning to his proposition; 'and I believe that I am a lucky fellow. I went through the Crimean war and saw the assault of the Malakoff tower, without a scratch. Wasn't that luck? At Solferino, where so many hundreds and thousands were killed, where so many who did not get killed, got what they never got over, I lost only *this*, my left little finger, which prevents my wearing a ring *à l'Anglaise*, but which gives me a pension for a year or two at least.'

'That *was* a lucky shot!' observed the Fox.

'How much is your pension?' inquired the Ferret.

Antoine, without replying to them, addressed his discourse to me. 'Shots,' he said, 'are curious things. Monsieur knows Captain Delhaye, at Belport?'

'Certainly. He has the Legion of Honour, the Crimean medals, and a hare-lip.'

'Pardon, Monsieur; the lip was cleft with a shot, and that is all the harm he took in the Russian campaign. Another officer I know had just the little tip of his ear shot off. One of my comrades had a bullet run round him, between his ribs and his skin, instead of going through him, as it ought to have

done. We were talking of luck,' he continued, raising his voice. 'Now, Monsieur, I have always noticed that people who are lucky in one thing are lucky in another. After having been lucky in the service, I am now lucky in the lottery. Everybody wants to find out who has won the great lot. I happen to know at this moment *who* has the great lot.'

'Hush! Hold your tongue!' I whispered. His only reply was a rapid wink with the eye next the carriage window. The brutes, our neighbours, were knocking out the ashes of their pipes and waking up from their stolid lethargy. The Fox's eyes twinkled, and he seemed to prick up his ears; the Ferret smacked his lips, as if athirst for blood.

'I dare say most of you bought plenty of tickets,' Antoine went on, regardless of my frowns—'plenty of tickets, and have got nothing, not so much as that! I had only two tickets, look you; only two. And here they are, uncut, still joined together. With no more than two tickets I have won *something*. I shall take the liberty of keeping them folded; but what do you call *this*, if you please, but 3,384,407, as plain as red ink can print it?'

Everybody in the carriage was aghast. Many rose from their seats to behold the fortunate scrap of paper. 'Why 3,384,406, the next before it, wins the great lot! Have you that also?' was the general cry.

'Do you now believe me, when I say that I know where the great lot is?'

'But 3,384,407 is a hundred franc lot,' one of the passengers observed; 'so that, with only two tickets, he has won two lots!'

'Didn't I tell you I was a lucky fellow?' Antoine boasted with a sort of swagger. 'But keep back, you there, in your own compartment; you need not lean over quite so far. I mean to keep my tickets, and what they bring to me, to myself. My knapsack is big enough to hold it all, and I think I shall be strong enough to carry it home.' This last remark was accompanied by a wink imperceptible to all except myself.

It was curious to observe the effect produced by Antoine's unfounded and boastful pretensions. He had made the passengers believe that he was the possessor of the number which preceded, instead of that which followed 3,384,407; and consequently, that the hundred thousand francs were his. He evidently rose in their esteem, became a great man in their eyes, and was regarded with visible deference. He was

a small incarnation of the golden calf. It explained to them my presence in his company in a third-class carriage. Perhaps one of his first freaks had been to engage a genteel travelling servant, myself; or more probably to treat me to the trip and the frolic with the open-handed communism of French *militaires* when in cash. We were the observed of all observers, not the least observant being our shabby neighbours.

Antoine, having flown his high-flying kite, subsided into temporary quietude. Amongst the unwashed crew there then arose a discussion or consultation which, although conducted in low tones of voice, was sufficiently audible for me to hear that they were speaking not French, but Flemish. They crouched low in their compartment, bringing their ugly heads into close contiguity, and casting suspicious glances around, to ascertain if they were overheard. The Fox seemed to take the lead, and to be acknowledged by the others as the master spirit.

'Listen to the Belgian beasts,' muttered Antoine, with a contemptuous toss of the head in their direction. 'Ninety-nine Flemings and one hog (saving your respect, Monsieur,) make together a round hundred. Hear how they squeal and grunt; they are after no good. They are scenting out some filthy meal to be stolen somewhere. Notice their tools; they haven't been used for a twelvemonth. Observe their bundles and bags; they are stuffed with shavings and hay. The set of canaille! I'll tell you what they are: they are pretended workmen, to cover their pretence of smuggling, which is a pretext to hide their real trade of thieving. They put me in mind of certain camp-followers, whom I have seen waiting for the end of a hard-fought battle, when they are sure of plenty of wounded to kill, and dead to plunder. I detest them. Shall we get into another carriage at the next station, Monsieur?'

'No, no. It is not worth while. You are prejudiced; although I confess they are not prepossessing. Besides, you are still a little excited. Your morning's dose isn't all worked off yet.'

He gave me a sullen sign of obedience. But our move, had we made it, would have proved useless; for two stations further on, at a small village called Weisbecque, which was close upon the Belgian frontier, four of the unpleasant five got out—namely, the Fox, the Bull, the Jackass, and the Pig—although they had taken their tickets to the same destination as ourselves—leaving the solitary Ferret to bear us company on our journey's end.

The journey out did shortly terminate. We had then nothing to do but transact our business, which was as simple and plain as possible. After due verification, the bank paid our respective claims in gold. Antoine deposited his small prize at the bottom of his knapsack beneath a variety of effects, while I locked my heavy booty in my leather courier's travelling bag. Oddly enough, as we entered the bank, the Belgian Ferret was loitering at the door; and, as we came out again, he was loitering there still. We had now only to take some refreshment and return by the earliest evening train, which, like that which had brought us in the morning, was *omnibus*, or for all three classes. We betook ourselves, therefore, to a modest restaurant near the railway station. Antoine strictly kept his promise of drinking with his meal nothing stronger than *café au lait*. When our repeat was half finished, in walked the Flemish Ferret; but he did not seem to recognise us. He called for a plate of soup, which he hastily swallowed, paid for it, and then walked out again. On the railway platform, there he was again—after his own affairs, we concluded—with a pencil and a card in hand.

'*Troisièmes en voiture!* Third-class passengers, get up!' shouted the railway officials. We obeyed. Before even the door was closed upon us, the Ferret rushed forward, and instead of getting up with us, as we expected he would, took down on his card the number of our railway carriage, 391, and then darted with it into the office of the Electric Telegraph. He still remained there when the train moved on. Of course it started without him. If he had any intention of accompanying us he was disappointed, and was left behind.

IV.

Somewhat tired with the day's excitement, and leaning back in my seat, with Antoine opposite, I indulged in a little inward musing.

'Who would guess,' I said to myself, 'that four thousand pounds in gold were being conveyed in this third-class carriage? It is a humble style of travelling; but before honour is humility. Four thousand pounds in gold! Certainly, a nice little addition to my property; but I won't be so weak as to give people a chance of alluding to beggars set on horseback. I can now, however, marry the Widow Le Blanc without being so very much obliged to her, pecuniarily. But I won't turn

proud and stuck up; on my part there shall be no airs or affectation. I won't look down on my former friends, nor make any great change in my way of living. I will put, perhaps, another grey to the widow's one-horse carriage—a pair is so much more respectable. Besides, there will be two of us to drag, and, it may be, three or four little ones by-and-by. Who can tell? And I will have a thorough-bred saddle-horse for my own proper use. I will take Antoine for my groom and factotum. He has worn a uniform; doubtless, he won't mind wearing a livery. Yes, he must have a livery. Louise can go on as usual, especially if I build them a pretty lodge to ornament the entrance of our grounds. And I will make it just small enough not to hold the mother-in-law. I will continue to write for "London Society;" they shall still have an occasional article. Nor will I alter my style of dress; an overdressed man who is turned of thirty is simply ridiculous. Only, instead of a provincial tailor, I may fairly get—

Bang! Bump! Orish! Crash! A succession of titanic blows seemed to be going along the whole length of the train, beginning with the engine, until they reached the carriage where I sat. My sententious projects were suddenly cut short by finding myself dashed with violence into Antoine's arms. If he had not been there to break the shock, I should have had my teeth knocked in or my nose crushed flat against the opposite wooden partition, to say nothing of broken arms and legs. We were in a deep railway cutting, with a steep bank on either side, and about half a mile from the Weissbeque station where our Belgian companions had got down in the morning. The train had stopped, and our carriage had fallen over, leaning on one side against the bank. I heard voices crying, 'Here is No. 391! Here! Here!' The door lying uppermost was opened, and I was dragged out by force of arms. My rescuers carelessly set me down, and then pulled Antoine out of his prison. It was getting dusk, almost dark; nevertheless I could perceive that the persons who had set us free were no other than the four Belgians who had inspired us with such aversion in the morning. We had clearly judged them unjustly and harshly. I could not help thanking them for the service rendered; on which they advised us to walk with them to the village, regardless of the other passengers, to secure a lodging for the night. To this, neither Antoine nor myself assented, but re-

solved to assist our fellow-travellers first.

I make no attempt to describe the scene—the cries, the shouts, the tears, the alarm. The train had run off the rails, and the accident was evidently caused by mischievous intention. Although many were battered and bruised, by great good fortune nobody was seriously hurt. When the confusion had subsided a little, the conductor of the train told us that, the locomotive having taken no harm and assistance being at hand, if we would wait for a few hours at Weissbeque we might go on again without further delay, and that he would telegraph to Belpport so that effect.

When there is no choice in a matter, objecting is of little use. The Fox—to whom I mentally apologized for having given him so disparaging a title—suggested, with the blindest smiles, that a friend of his, hard by, kept a small public-house just outside the village, where we could find shelter and accommodation until the train should be replaced on the rails and the signal for starting given. I assented, struggling in my own mind against what I now believed to be an unfounded dislike. Antoine complied with a very bad grace, and followed me more like a dog who will not desert his master than because he likes where he is going to.

V.

Leaving the line of railway, we directed our steps towards the village, whose oil lamps feebly glimmered in the distance. Before reaching it, and about half way between it and the station, was a solitary new-built house, which seemed falling into ruins before it was finished. 'This,' said the Fox, 'was our destination,' quite *comme il faut* and convenient. We entered, accompanied by our new acquaintances. The place was dingy, raw, ill-lighted, isolated, with not a creature in it except the host, and he much of the same out as our new-made Belgian friends.

Under all circumstances, waiting is tedious; in this case, it was excessively so. Without flattering myself, I believed the widow would be anxious on my account; while Antoine doubtless was thinking of Louise's anger at his unexpected and protracted absence. I had no book or journal to while away the time. Common civility required that I should offer refreshment to the parties who had helped me out of the shipwrecked carriage.

They accepted; but Antoine refused to drink with them, for which I could not blame him. They chatted low in

their unintelligible Flemish, while we sat in gloomy silence gazing at the waning lamp or listening to the distant barking of dogs. Time flew slowly, very slowly; but still the earth was revolving on its axis, and therefore time did fly. The master of the house walked out, as if he was tired of our unprofitable company, and did not come back. The Belgians interchanged a few stealthy glances amongst themselves, when the Fox, addressing the Pig, said in French, 'Just go and see, Hans, what they are doing at the station. Perhaps these Messieurs may be able to start soon.'

Hans went out, and came in again long before he could have gone to the station and back, growling, 'There's no chance of the train's moving for another couple of hours, at least. *All right!*' he added in English, the expression being naturalized in France. The Fox rose, advanced to me, laying his hand upon my shoulder, and said with a sneer, 'You're almost as lucky, Monsieur, as your friend. You've had a railway spill, for which you have to thank us, without hurting a hair of your head. I hope your good luck will stick to you.'

Before I could shake him off, he had pinned me behind. My arms were helpless and I could not stir. The other three threw themselves on Antoine, knocking him to the ground, together with the chair on which he sat, and howling, 'Your knapsack! give us your knapsack! We must have your great lot! Your hundred thousand francs!'

'Dogs!' shouted Antoine, doing battle with them as if each of his limbs had been a separate and independent champion. 'You shall never have my hundred thousand francs. You shall kill me first!'

Between the struggles of the combatants thus wrestling three against one, I caught a transient glance of his face, and his eye shot me a telegraphic wink. I believed at once that, if he had chosen, he could have disabled his assailants and have escaped from them.

'Quick! quick!' barked the Fox from behind my ear. 'There is no time to lose in cirious feats. We did not make the train run off the rails for nothing. Give him your knives!' And three knives soon were flashing in the air.

'Oh! my poor hundred thousand francs!' groaned Antoine, hypocritically, at the same time ceasing his resistance.

'Let them have them at once!' I

said, seriously alarmed. The sight of the steel made my blood run cold. 'Let them have them!' imprudently adding, 'I will make it up to you.'

'Monsieur is rich!' snarled the Fox, 'if he can supply great lots to his friends. 'Tis a pity that we have not the time to pay Monsieur a visit at home.'

The knapsack was yielded with well-acted reluctance. 'Take half of it, Messieurs,' Antoine pleaded. 'Give me only a quarter! Leave me only a thousand francs!'

'We will give you more than you wish for,' bellowed the Bull, as soon as its owner was stripped of his knapsack, 'if you follow us.' And the trio instantly threw open the door and vanished in the outer darkness.

In a moment, the Fox had loosed his hold of me and made a dash in the same direction. As quick as lightning Antoine clutched him by the wrists, secured his prisoner, and shouted from the open door at the top of his voice, which must have made itself heard far and wide, '*A moi! au voleur! a l'assassin!* Help! thieves! murder.'— 'Gently, gently, my very brave Belge,' he growled, holding his captive in a gripe of iron. 'If you make the least attempt to bite or kick, I will wring your neck first, and then trample the life out of you. You feel, too, that I can do it. Help! murder! thieves! help! I want to introduce you to the gendarmerie.'

'My husband!' screamed Louise, rushing into the hovel, and attacking the Fox with the fury of a tigress. 'They are killing my husband, and I not there to help him! My husband! My cherished husband!' And her blows showered on the victim's head and shoulders.

'That will do, Louise! good woman! Thank you for coming. Enough, enough. We don't want to kill him, but to get him into prison. Take my handkerchief, twist it, and help me to tie his arms behind him.'

'Are you hurt?' inquired the breathless widow, hurrying in and clasping me in her arms. 'We arrived just in time. Have the wretches injured you?'

'Not much; although I was nipped in a vice by this villain, who is going now to meet his deserts.'

'As for that,' said the Fox, with an attempt at defiance, 'the imprisonment is only a pinprick; and at the end of it, the great lot being by this time over the frontier, I shall have my share. They know my knife too well to cheat

me out of twenty thousand francs, even if I had to wait twenty years for them.'

'Which you will, and longer,' Antoine rejoined. 'Your share, when you get it, amounts to twenty francs. Monsieur, there, has the great lot, safe in his leather bag. You had your fingers on it, without knowing it.'

Not until that announcement did the Fox strike his brush. On hearing the bitter truth, he became completely crest-fallen. The whole village being on the alert, he was soon handed over to the authorities. The widow told us that, waiting for me with her carriage at Belpoit, accompanied by Louise looking out for her husband, and hearing of the telegram from Weissbecque, she had immediately ordered a special train, which the railway authorities granted the more readily as they made use of it to send additional help to the spot. This train was now waiting with

its steam up, and she proposed our returning with it immediately.

Of course we two had a first-class compartment to ourselves. Seated by the widow's side, I took her hand, without saying a word, to express my thanks for the interest she had manifested in my safety. Soon, her head was reposing on my shoulder, and something told me that tears were flowing—tears, not of sorrow, but of satisfaction. I kissed her. Is it an unpardonable indiscretion, ladies, to confess that she returned my kiss?

'Will Monday three weeks suit you?' I whispered in her ear.

'Perfectly,' she answered as softly, although there was no one to overhear us. 'My papers have been ready for some time past, and you have only to speak to the notary. But as our family connexions are not large, and we need not invite many people, I think we may say Monday fortnight.'

ARCHERY.

'**SHOT!**' cried the judge at the ladies' target; and echo, far down the line where the gentlemen were shooting, seemed to catch up the monosyllable, and answer, '**Shot!**'

And then there was a rustling of dresses, a gathering of camp-stools, talk was resumed, and here and there a little laughing was going on, as, bow in hand, the flower of modern archers marched across the greensward to the opposite line of targets. It was the opening day of the twenty-first meeting of the Grand National Society of Archers, and the first flight of arrows had been discharged. The first flight of arrows is always interesting, like the first over in a cricket match, the first cast on a salmon stream, or the first blaze at the first covey on the day of St. Partridge. The blissful anticipation, which has been said to be more enjoyable than the actual performance, rises then to its height.

The scene is that large expanse of rural undulated park known by the name Alexandra, which are long will be one of London's happiest playplaces. Our metropolis needs such. This is the first great event in its annals. But at present the park is in a transition state; roads are making, and on the top of the hill bricks are burning, foundations digging, scaffoldings of an inexplicable character rising up, and general preparation for a building on a leviathan

scale are being pushed vigorously forward. On climbing the hill you look down upon the works, and a confusion of workers trundling wheelbarrows, making trenches, and carrying on multifarious occupations. Already the top of the hill has been cut away, and the scene is suggestive of a beehive suddenly overturned. We will, if you please, accept the promise it gives of future usefulness and beauty, and say nothing about its present condition. In matters mental or physical the transition state is seldom a satisfactory or pleasant one. Not that there is nothing to admire here even now. Thickly-foliaged trees, under which you may lie in sweet shade and watch the summer clouds, and miles of daisied grass, over which you are free to roam at will, are always dear to those who have been long in cities pent. If we could leave the fair scene upon this embryo cricket-ground and the sport which has just begun, and wind away under yonder trees and up the gentle slope to the rustic gateway under that tempting clump of elms, we should find ourselves in a lovely grove, among gay parterres of bright flowers dotting beautiful lawns bounded by pleasant, shady walks, shut in by shrubs and overhung with dark cedar and fir, with purple beech, and bay, and wide-spreading chestnut, leading down to a smiling villa, with doors invitingly open. But not for us is this

Arcadian grove to-day. This little spot in the valley has 'metal more attractive.'

Hark to the thud! thud! thud! of the arrows striking the target. If you have ever drawn an arrow to its head, and heard that peculiar dull sound ensue, you will know that it is pleasant to the ear of the shooter as is the bubble of a wayside brook to the thirsty pedestrian who rambles in unfrequented paths. Look at the scene! Is not the *tout ensemble* charming? Here is a long

row of England's fairest, stateliest daughters, engaged in the most graceful pastime, the most inviting exercise art has invented or fancy can suggest. Ball-room grace never equalled it. Ball-room costume was never so attractive and fascinating. What constitutes its peculiar charm it is not exactly possible to say. A Regent Street *modiste* might fail to tell. But it *is* charming; and there are here fair figures and bright eyes suggestive of the bold Penthesilea, who durst



ARCHERY CHAMPIONS.

MR. EDWARDS.

MR. FORD.

MR. MUIR.

'The Danish fleet oppose,
And from her bow sharp arrows sent,
To gall her harnessed foes.

'No sooner was the battle done,
Her golden helm laid by,
Then those by arms she could not take
She slaughtered with her eye.'

Precisely so. This bevy of fair dames would form a formidable army to encounter, either in tented field or council hall. For (to quote again, which is always allowable in archery gossip)

'Though with the bow the snowy arms may wound,

Yet in the eye the surest death is found.'

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The green, elastic turf sets off the costume of these fair Clorindas, these supple Venuses arrayed before the long row of targets. How the sun flashes on the much-coveted golden centre, which is (so to speak) the apple of the archer's eye, and the shining outer circles of crimson and blue! There are fourscore fair archers: admittedly in them centres the grace and beauty of modern shooting.

See them step forward in succession. Observe that there is an utter absence of flying ribbons, waving tresses, and baggy sleeves. A nautical man would say they were the tautest and trimmest

craft he ever saw; and I, feeling myself quite incompetent to the task of describing adequately the effect produced, willingly take refuge under his wing, and say nothing of the dainty scarfs and the wicked little hats which are decked with green leaves and set in a most provokingly coquettish way over neatly-braided hair. Then there are the belts; what lady does not a waist-belt become? and medals, honourable trophies of many a hard-foughten field.

The costume of an archeress is all-important. Not only does it most materially affect the pageant, which, from a spectator's point of view, is a great matter, but it very nearly concerns the shooter. Hence have arisen the numerous attempts made by societies to adopt a distinctive costume. But this has generally been found impracticable. The Bow-women of the Wye, the Royal Sherwood Archers, the Harley Bush Bowmen, and many others, even to the extent of regulating the costume to be worn at the archery balls, have endeavoured to legislate on this matter. But a standard of grace cannot be fixed, and now ladies are left to follow their own taste, and the result is far more pleasant than any uniformity could be.

'A good and practised archeress,' says a lady, who is one herself, 'knows that there must not be a string, a ribbon, or a long curl, or a flying feather in the way of either bow or arrow.' The same authority declares large crinolines to be very uncomfortable, and those who remember the whimsical effect produced at an important meeting a year or two ago, will readily endorse the assertion. It happened that the day of competition, on the occasion referred to, was tempestuous. The ladies—many of them with reluctance, be it said—had adopted the prevailing fashion, and appeared in the archery field with an exuberance of skirt. Boreas did not neglect the opportunity, and the wind came sweeping over the ground, causing the skirts to touch the bows; and this, occurring at the moment of loosing, made many an arrow from the bow of a clever archeress

'Be short—gone—and on either side, wide.'

Not only were there the cases in which the bow was actually turned aside, but the fear that it would be so unsettled the shooters, and promised to make the meeting very unsatisfactory, till a lady, more careful of her fame as an archeress than of her appearance at the moment, very wisely made use of her cord, as captain of a target, to tie in

the skirts of her dress. And then scarfs, and sashes, and cords were impressed into the same service, and there was a field full of ladies whose skirts are said to have presented the novel appearance of so many sacks of flour tied in at the middle. But the reputations of the shooters were saved, and good scores, for a windy day, were made.

The hint which this and similar experiences furnished was taken by a gentleman interested in archery, and an apparatus which admirably answers the purpose, is convenient, and not unsightly, was invented, and named the Anti-Eolian.

We will return to the targets. There are fourteen pairs devoted to the ladies, and in front of one row of these are fourteen ladies. At the back and around them are many more, seated on camp-stools, talking, smiling, all vivacity and animation. Every time an arrow is discharged the famous five points of Roger Ascham have a practical manifestation. Each lady walks up to the line, and assumes her position or standing. The shaft is drawn from the quiver. This is a trifling matter; but some ladies, by a neat little turn of the wrist, impart to it an artistic effect that is quite surprising, keeping their eyes firmly fixed upon the target the while. Next comes the *nocking*, another simple process, but there are several ways of doing it, and only one best one. Then the bow is raised to a nearly perpendicular position, and now comes the graceful posture.

Bishop Latimer calls the slight inclination of the body which precedes the pull 'laying the body in the bow.' Nicholls, in his 'London Artillery,' says, in contradictory terms, only to be understood by an archer, that the body must be

'Not stooping, nor yet standing straight upright.'

It is a fine sight, this row of ladies grasping their bows firmly, with heads erect and chests well forward. There is an air of military precision about the attitude, and when the arrow is drawn down, the body thrown backward, and still as a statue—as it is during that moment which precedes the losing—the figure is complete, and nothing more is required to show the wonderful flexibility of the human frame, and the graceful poses that attend the practice of 'gentle archerie.'

Ascham, writing in the days of 'good Queen Bess,' asserted that archery had no literature; and perhaps it has been the most neglected of any woodland sport. 'Men who understand shoot-

inge,' said he, 'cannot write, and those who can write do not knowe shootinge.' So he applied himself to the work; and down till a very recent date his book has been the best obtainable. But in this age, when everybody writes, and when a great revival has taken place in the practice of archery (of which more anon), it has not fared so badly. Mr. Horace A. Ford, who has proved his competency to speak of it in many a contest with the best bowmen our kingdom could furnish, has written an able treatise, 'Archery; its Theory and Practice,' which might have delighted the author of 'Toxophilus' himself. If any readers of this paper are seized with a desire to learn the art, I refer them to it. The editor might object to my occupying two-thirds of this number of 'London Society' with the subject, and it could not be treated in all its bearings in less space.

Yet are there questions with which one wishes to grapple. You may here and there see a shooter making use of only *one eye*, the other being closed with a comical and certainly unpleasant effect. There is the whole question of aiming; in short, there are acres of debatable ground in archery practice. Ascham, of whom I spoke just now, who wrote three centuries ago, declared 'drawing' to be the better part of shooting. The point might almost be ceded to him, for it includes nearly the whole art. Yet see how divided opinion and practice are upon the matter. Walk down this line of modern Dianas and watch. Some draw their arrows to the full at once, and keep them there while they aim; others draw them two-thirds while the arrow is pointing upwards, and finish the pull at the moment the aim is taken; others adopt quite different methods. Well, of course, one would like to have a fling at all these: every one has his own method, and believes it to be right.

This shooting with the long bow is more difficult than modern rifle shooting. Your arrow has no elaborately-constructed sight-piece, and an archer requires something more even than

'Stout arm, strong bow, and steady eye,
Union, true heart, and courtesie.'

Judgment in every shot is demanded, and it is not too much to say that these ladies, descendants, no doubt, of gentlemen who drew good bows at Hastings and elsewhere, would, with a little practice, prove themselves formidable antagonists at Wimbledon. One archer says: 'Our real archer celebrities would any of them at once step forth as full-blown rifle

shots, since rapid electric sympathy betwixt eye and hand is indispensable to both.' He then proceeds to show that the rule does not apply inversely. This, no doubt, is just a trifle *outré*; but then every archer is an enthusiast of his art, and long distant be the day when he shall be otherwise. It won us glory before the days of saltpetre and Whitworth, and now that it has been superseded by what Carew quaintly calls the 'Hell-born murderer,' it affords us one of the most enjoyable and beautiful amusements. And if any one wishes to know how useful it is, let them go to the next meeting and see the glowing cheeks and the beaming eyes, the straight figures and the muscle (I hope I may be allowed to refer to a lady's bicep) it makes. The vice-like grip, the power to draw a bow of 28 lbs., the steady nerve, and the 'stout heart,' are not these useful elsewhere than in front of the targets? And archery, of all exercises, promotes these. It is a deadly foe to consumptions and rheumatisms. I spoke just now of the peculiar grace observable in the archery field. Is it not attributable to the fact that the ladies practise archery? An hour a day through the summer spent in drawing a good yew bow is calculated to raise the physique of a lady in a wonderful degree. Hence the everywhere observable fact that the ladies to be found at archery meetings are more 'supple sinewed,' tall, and strong than their compeers.

But there is one condition upon which the whole utility of archery on this point rests. It is that the strength should not be overtaxed by the use of too powerful a bow. It is necessary that this should be everywhere repeated, for it is the growing practice among archers to make use of bows by far too powerful. The results are as disastrous and melancholy as they are natural. There is always a point at which one grain more will break the camel's back. This fatal tendency for 'wrestling with their gear,' as old Ascham calls it, dates back from the earliest annals of archery, and is, I am afraid, as prevalent to-day as ever. The object is to shoot into the bull's eye, and that from a distance of only 100 yards. There can therefore be no justification for the use of a bow of more than say 50 lbs. pull. This is a point of so much importance that I may quote the great modern authority:—

'One of the great mistakes young archers commit (and many old ones too) is that they *will* use bows too strong for them. . . The question is not so much as to what a man can *pull* as to what he

can loose. How many a promising archer has this mania for strong bows destroyed (in an archery sense of the term)! I call to mind one, at this moment—one of the best and most beautiful shots of his day; a winner too of the first and second prizes at the Grand National Meetings two successive years—whose accuracy was at one time completely leaving him and dwindling

beneath mediocrity, owing, as I firmly believe, to his infatuation on this point. Another with whom I had a slight acquaintance brought himself to death's door by a violent illness of nearly a year's duration through injury to his physical powers brought on by the same thing, only carried to a much greater excess.

There is no fear of archers running to the opposite extreme. There is not



'LAYING THE BODY IN THE BOW.'*

See p. 213.

the same temptation, else it might be necessary to add that it is as great a mistake to use a bow below your strength as one over it, though the consequences are by no means so serious.

Perhaps the nicest point in the craft of a bowman is what is called *loosing*. This is preceded by what is termed *holding*, a process of which Ascham

says, 'It must not be long, for it puts a bow in danger of breaking, and, also spoils the shot; it must occupy so little time, that it may be better perceived in the mind, when it is done, than seen with the eye when doing.' Three centuries have failed to produce any more explicit direction than that. And the subsequent *loosing* of the string is a

* Sketched at the target of the Championess.

matter upon which the combined wisdom of all the writers has been brought to bear. It is just one of those subjects upon which you may theorise and theorise, but practice alone can teach how it must be done.

Let us turn again to the shooters. The arrows are flying fast, the competition is going rapidly forward, and already there is among the competitors a

deep interest in the register of every target, and people are talking of a new championess who is shooting with wonderful skill, and in a style the most perfect and graceful ever seen. Her three arrows make three successive thuds, and England's championess must look to her laurels, for the Shamrock threatens to triumph over the Rose. It is one of the beauties of the contest that one lady



MEASURING A 'GOLD.'

does not know how another is scoring. There are three targets round which the spectators cluster, and three 'observed of all observers,' between whom the contest lies. The duties of the judges, which just now seemed to consist of crying 'Shot' and 'March,' are increasing. Arrows are piercing the bull's eye, and fair archeresses watch anxiously the important business of measuring a

gold upon which the chance of a prize may depend.

Meanwhile, what of the fourscore gentlemen? Who among all that number shall be champion? Here are assembled British bowmen who have met year by year to try their skill with the weapon of Robin Hood. The air is thick with barbed shafts, and the targets bristle with the arrows driven through the two

inches of matted straw. Milan armour would scarce have withstood them. Hark how

'The impatient weapon whizzes on the wing,
Sounds the tough horn, and twangs the
quivering string.'

as arrow after arrow is lodged in the target, till the last quiver is emptied. It is rather formal; there is little of the grace observable here which makes the charm of the ladies' targets; and there is an evident carelessness about costume which produces anything but a pleasing result. I don't want to see archers dressed after the absurd fashion of modern Foresters; but both for effect and convenience they might make some little concessions.

Here the contest lies with two. This time it is the Thistle and the Rose that contend, and it seems probable that the medal will go over the border once again.

Archery is exciting only to the competitors. Possibly it was never intended for spectators. Each round is a repetition of the preceding one. Each archer walks out, shoots his three arrows, and gives place to the next, till all have shot. Then they march over and repeat the same thing again and again. Even when the contest is exceedingly close, it is impossible, by reason of not knowing precisely how close it is until the scores are finally cast up, to get up any enthusiasm among the spectators to correspond with that of the shooters. And their enthusiasm even is of a very quiet and undemonstrative sort, displayed rather in seditious private practice than in any manifestation of joy over a triumph. Archers wear their honours very modestly. The scene in Alexandra Park had its charms, especially at the ladies' end, where the elegance, grace, and ease of the shooters made it interesting; but three or four hours were not required for the appreciation of it. Say not, gentle Toxophile, that I am no true archer because I repeat the verdict which was passed by so much of London Society as came to see your skill.

These national meetings have had great influence in extending the practice of archery. The prizes offered are considerable, but their chief value, in the eyes of their winners, does not lie in their intrinsic worth. As the yachtsman to his yacht is the bowman to his bow. It is a weapon calculated to inspire regard. So much skill is demanded in its use, and such associations cling to it.

The history of the introduction into

England of the long bow is lost in the mists of antiquity. Paris drove his shaft into the vulnerable heel of great Achilles, while he was soliciting the hand of Polyxena in the Temple of Minerva. Demosthenes, at Pylos, won a victory over the Lacedemonians with it; and it was the long bow that first made the name of Englishman a terror to his foes. All down our history to the time of the great struggle between king and people it comes, now as a victorious arm, now in a royal edict commanding its use, now as the instrument of sport in the hands of noble men and women in the grand old age of chivalry. Under one form or another it has been the weapon of almost every country and people in times of war, and the adjunct to amusement in the times of peace.

To the art of killing England has always paid due attention. Probably there has never been a period when we were so averse to work of that description as at the present time; yet never, not even when penalties were enforced from those who did not make themselves proficient, was so much care and attention paid to it as now. Sir Emerson Tennent has told the Story of the Gun, and what a story it is of hand and brain work devoted to experiments which should enable us to kill men wholesale. Forcing itself, too, into contrast with the use of the old-fashioned weapon by modern hands, at the Alexandra Park, comes that meeting at Wimbledon, where it has been amply demonstrated that one man, with the hand weapon which superseded the bow, can kill his hundred men from a distance of 500 yards in 24 minutes 35 seconds. Of old it used to be said that an English archer carried two dozen Frenchmen under his belt; but what shall be said of the modern rifleman?

At the battle of Hastings, where Harold was slain by an arrow, the inhabitants of this island appear first to have learned how formidable a weapon it became in skilled hands. It is traceable from that time; and numerous statutes ordering its use, declaring the price which should be paid for it, the formation of butts, and the provision of bows and arrows, in later times, supply links in its history down to the time when it was supplanted by the discovery of gunpowder. Still so meagre is its history that there is room for all sorts of conjecture and doubt. I have no new light to throw on any of the old controversies, and am not even ambitious of proving that Sir Walter Scott ascribed to Locksley feats he could not possibly have performed. My task lies rather

with the revival and present aspect of archery than with its past. Let us not, however, with ruthless hand sweep away the legends that delighted our youth. Robin Hood, Olym of the Clough, William of Cloudestie and Fair Cloudestie, are they not a part of English history?

What a contrast must the ancient meetings of archers have presented to those of the present day. In Henry VIII's reign a great match was celebrated at Windsor, at which he jocosely dubbed one Barlow 'Duke of Shore-ditch,' a title that was maintained in archery a long time, and from which also arose many other fictitious ones, till all the suburbs had their dignitaries, such as the Marquis of Pancras, and Earl of Clerkenwell.

Modern archers look with suspicion upon the reputed long shots of ancient times; and it is certain that modern bows and bowmen cannot equal them. A statute of Henry VIII. did not allow youths to practise at less than 240 yards; a distance at which, as appears from some experiments made at Edinburgh, the archers of to-day cannot depend upon hitting the 'clout.' In upwards of two thousand shots, only ten hits were made. Whether the defect be in the bows of modern makers, or in modern muscles, I can't tell; but there are few archers of the present day who can in flight shooting (that is with light arrows) cover 300 yards.

'Some years back,' says Mr. Ford, 'Mr. Muir, of Edinburgh, made many experiments with strong and medium power bows, with the view of testing the possibility of accomplishing 300 yards; but though an archer of great power and experience, he found that with a bow of from 58 lbs. to 62 lbs. he could shoot further than with a stronger one; and that with that weight of bow he could not quite reach the desired distance.' With a Turkish horse-bow he, however, shot 306 yards, and Mr. Ford has increased that distance by two yards. But this is only a trifle over half the distance to which the crack shots of our ancient yeomanry used to send their arrows. And so late as 1800, Mr. Strutt, who, in matters of which he was an eye-witness is usually accurate, states that he saw the Turkish ambassador shoot upwards of 480 yards. This was in presence of London archers. He used a much shorter bow than the English ones.

But modern bowmen care little for this description of shooting. The Royal Body Guard of Scotland is the society

that chiefly supports the long distances in what is called clout shooting, the clout being a small white target.

When the bow ceased to be a weapon, and practice was no longer imposed on the people, it fell into disuse. The musket that supplied its place in the battle-field, also took its place, to a great extent, in the amusements of the people; and there is a long blank space in its history down to the time when it entered upon an entirely new stage.

One or two obscure societies existed during the early part of last century. As far back as 1673 there is a record of shooting in Yorkshire for a silver arrow, and the name of the winner of it in that year is recorded. The competition for this silver arrow would appear to be the oldest prize meeting of which we have any account. It took place annually, with few exceptions; and according to one of the laws, was to be shot for within twenty-four miles of the small village of Eriholme, in the North Riding. The competitors had to pay five shillings before shooting, and sixpence for every hit in the white; but they received one shilling from the funds for every hit in the gold. The distance was 100 yards, and two arrows were shot from each end. The maker of the first gold was captain. There were, in addition to the silver arrow, a bugle, a gold medal, and a cup for prizes; and there was a curious law for the prevention of cursing, imposing a fine upon those who were guilty and detected.

Though other companies of archers were in existence at this time, the Soorton arrow contest appears to have been the only one which in any measure resembled our practice at the present time. This may have been the model upon which the subsequently established ones were founded.

In 1776, Mr. Waring adopted shooting as a pastime for the benefit of his health; and in 1780 was founded the Royal Toxophilites, and with it began in earnest the revival of archery. It became fashionable to a certain degree. People discovered that it was a most valuable exercise and a charming sport, and everywhere societies of bowmen sprang up, and began again to

'Look to their butts and take good aims.'

Some little time elapsed before the ladies adopted it. To the honour of that ancient Society of Bowmen, the woodmen of the Forest of Arden, be it said, that they were the first to admit them.

With the establishment of the Grand National, a great impetus was given to

the art. The public began to note the scores, and archery took its place as one of the finest of English pastimes. The attendance at the first six meetings only averaged six ladies and seventy-four gentlemen shooters. Now we have scores of large prize meetings in the season, and at all of them there is a large attendance. Foremost among them is the National; next come the Leamington and the Great Western, always a charming meeting, held in some sweet city of the west; and the Crystal Palace, and the Irish Grand National, and the Scotch meeting. There are, indeed, so many large public meetings of archers now, and so many societies having their three 'grand days' in every season, and their weekly assemblies as well, that their mere names would fill pages.

It has been well said that there is no royal road to the bull's eye. Whoever would lodge his arrows in it must practise, and that assiduously. Nothing else can assure such enormous scores as have been made in late years. With the practice of bowmen in the days when it was a national weapon it is impossible to compare these, but they may be, and have been, set beside those of the famous archers of a few years ago, and the contrast shows a wonderful degree of progress.

And here, O Muse! let us sing the names of heroes and of heroines.

'And first of my cestus the lass shall be queen
Who wears a gay sash of Toxophilite green.'

There is a new star in the firmament. Miss Betham, of the County of Dublin Archers, has triumphed all through the present season. She is the 'lightest deliverest finest of archers,' as John Parton said of Thomas, Earl of Arran. Her scoring is wonderful, and her style delights the eyes of all

'Those who in skilful archery contend.'

At Leamington, at the Crystal Palace, and at the National she triumphed. The long invincible names of Horniblow, Atkinson, Chetwynd, Hare, Turner, and many more, 'good archers and true,' whose names are household words where modern skill in the use of the bow is the theme, were vanquished. Mrs. Horniblow, championess in 1853, and many subsequent years, beat Miss Betham in the Emerald Isle last year. This, the Shamrock has come to England and been everywhere victorious, with larger scores than have ever been registered opposite the name of the championess.

Aux héros. The National of this

year will be memorable for the fact that at it Mr. H. A. Ford, the best bowman of our age, took what he himself declared to be his farewell shot among his brethren of the bow. Since he first won the National in 1850, at Edinburgh, his has been the most prominent name in the archery world. Year after year it stood at the head of the lists; and his scores of 1251 at Cheltenham, in 1857, and 1076 at Exeter, in the following year, will long be pointed to. At the first of these meetings, out of the 280 shots he fired, viz., 144 at 100 yards, 96 at 80 yards, and 48 at 60 yards, only 43 missed the target. His scores at Leamington in 1856 and 1858 were upwards of 1100.

It is one of the charms of the National that it is, in every sense of the word, a happy *réunion* at which ladies and gentlemen, bound together by that indissoluble freemasonry which everywhere obtains among archers, separated by the length of our land, or even more, meet once a year and spend two or three days together in pursuit of their favourite pastime. They are very happy meetings. You may see there men of whom it might be said, as it was of Sir William Wood, whilome Captain of the Finsbury archers,

'Long have they lived the honour of the bow,
And their great age to that alone do owe.'

The meeting at Alexandra Park presented some notable instances of this kind. Mr. Peter Muir, of Edinburgh, who at the second meeting of the National at York in 1845 won the championship, who again, in 1847, placed his name at the head of the register, and reappeared in that position in 1863, was there, still a fine archer; and Mr. Edwards, of Birmingham, champion of 1860-61-62, who has held a prominent place in the lists for a long time, only regained his championship from Mr. Muir by 76 points, these, too, made at the shorter distances. These three, Mr. Ford, Mr. Muir, and Mr. Edwards, have been the heroes of many contests, and England's champion bowmen for nearly a score years; but the lists of the last meeting also show the names of gentlemen victors before they appeared above the horizon; and there are unsuccessful gross scores made by many archers that denote a great general advancement in skill in the use of the long bow. The highest score of the present year, made by Mr. Edwards, did not quite reach 900, being 354 below Mr. Ford's highest; but the aggregate scores of all the shooters showed a different result.

The modern bowmen devote all their energies to this target-shooting. It can no longer be said—

'When shawes are sheene and woodes be faire,
And leaves be large and longe,
The archere he walketh in fair forest
To hear the wilde birde's song.'

Yet the adherents of the sport claim for it something of its sylvan character, and many of our pleasantest archery grounds are in the sweetest nooks of the country. There is pleasant Powderham, in Devon; and the woodmen of Arden still meet in what was the ancient forest, where there are miles of noble trees and stately deer park.

Mr. Ford, in his book, after eulogizing some clever scores of the champion of the North, Mr. Muir, says: 'His best score, however, to my mind, is the following, distance between twenty and thirty yards—

'Two shots, two hits, score a hawk and a crow (fact).'

Roving, though now generally neglected, and for many reasons impracticable, was one of the pleasantest kinds of practice open to an archer. What is more sweet, on a bright morning in May or June, than to stroll out in the green fields, bow in hand, and wander wherever fancy leads, fixing now and again on some fair archer's mark, and sending an arrow at it? There are larger demands upon skill, strength, and judgment in this kind of shooting than can be possible when the distance is fixed, and for an hour together you shoot at the formal target from the self-same spot. It is Robin Hoodism itself when some crow, winging its way to the rooky wood, or some hawk of 'murderous mind' hovering over a brood of partridges, becomes the mark. May be a shaft or two, aimed at some tempting object in 'nettle-bed mound' or 'briar-grown dell,' is seen no more; and certes you cannot show, unless you bring home hawk or crow, as Mr. Muir did, any such tangible proof of your prowess as the register presents. But registers are vanities, and there is a long account on the other side. There is the beautiful air, the sylvan scenery, the wild birds' song, and the experience which teaches the eye to measure. This was the sort of practice in which the English yeomen, who shot so far and so straight, indulged long ago. And archers who seek for the reason why, at the present time, 300 yards is the maximum distance covered by a flight-arrow, may find it in the decay and general abandonment of roving.

Talking of roving, a good story is told of a 'gentleman so prodigal of his speech, that it made his mouth to run over.' Having one day strolled into the forest, he stated that he at one shot cut away a stag's ear and his foot together, and killed a fox. The company to whom he told this story knew his infirmity, and was willing to allow him some little latitude; but this was too much, and they expostulated with him. Whereupon 'his man, who stood by, said that the deer was scratching his ear with his hinder foot, and so lost both, and the arrow glancing killed the fox.' But he whispered in his master's ear, desiring that he would next time 'lie within compass; for,' said he, 'I had never so much ado as to bring the ear and the foot together.'

My readers will agree with me that this is a sort of drawing the long bow which is 'more honoured in the breach than the observance.'

I spoke just now of the comparative strength of ancient and modern archers. It is but a natural consequence of our system of life that the men and women of the present day should be less powerful than those of old. It is a source of regret with many bow-women and bowmen that all through the winter they have no practice. Archery is not the sort of exercise for days when the snow is on the ground; nor can any practical good to more than a few result from the establishment of galleries for the purpose, such as that of Mr. Waring, forty or fifty years ago.

There is, however, a very valuable apparatus that might, especially to ladies, be of eminent service in the winter months. This is 'the Ranelagh,' and it is the most useful article for gentle gymnastic exercise I know. It is composed of cylindrical bands of vulcanized india-rubber, which are affixed to a cord that works on a pulley. The brackets in which this runs may be affixed to any wall. At the other end of the india-rubber are neat handles. Taking hold of these, and stepping forward, a pull of from five to five-and-forty pounds may be obtained, and the very muscles which come into play in archery may be developed by imitating the action of pulling a bow.

Among continental archers no species of contest is so popular as the popinjay shooting. Might not this be adopted at some of our English meetings with advantage? It would do much to relieve them from the unvarying sameness they now present, and, as I think, to spread the practice of archery. The ancient

society of Kilwinning archers celebrated the 382nd meeting of this kind at Kilwinning Abbey, a few weeks ago, when the papingo, fixed to the summit of a pole, suspended from the top of the tower of the ruined abbey, afforded, as it always does, some very excellent sport, and was at length brought down by Mr. Campbell. The scene at these meetings has more vivacity than is displayed at any of our great ones, and,

without interfering with any present arrangements, it might be adopted. Of old, such games were celebrated not far from the scene of this year's great contest. Why not revive them, and thus aid the already fast-growing popularity of the art, to our forefathers' skill in which we owe so much—the art which is famous through all its annals, and which is now one of the pleasantest and most beneficial pastimes of the age?

THE SPA AT SCARBOROUGH.

A Reminiscence.

UPWARDS rose the joyful music
On the ocean's summer breeze;
Gaily flowed the stream of light talk,
Blent with laughter midst the trees;
As we crushed the sparkling gravel
'Neath our slowly-treading feet,
Wending towards the scene of pleasure
Where all grades of fashion meet.

Bright with smiles of festive gladness
Was the overarching sky;
Bright with all the tones of colour
Were the flowers we sauntered by;
Bright with laughter were the tide-waves
As they kissed the sloping sand;
Bright were all things, as a jewel
Fit to light a royal hand.

Seated where the shadows veiled us
From the fervent light above,
In an arbour, jasmine wreathed,
Meet for words of whispered love,
Drank we in the strains of music,
Pondered we the radiant scene,
As we watched it moving, life-full,
Glorious sea and cliffs between.

Oh! the dresses, neat, eccentric,
Individualized and queer;
Oh! the dresses various coloured
As the flowers that deck the year;
Oh! the dresses, breezy, airy,
Most expansive, startling, grand;
Oh! the dresses, quite peculiar
As the fossils on the strand.

Oh! the hats, conceited, pretty,
With their feathers waving free;
With their flowerets, that seemed stolen,
Bathed in morn-dew from the lea;
With their lofty crowns and low crowns,
Stiff or racy, neat or wild;
With their veils (a soft protection?)
Lest your heart should be beguiled.

Oh! the boots that stept so lightly,
And a moment glanced in view
'Neath the wafted muslin, flower-strewn,
Or the silk of sumptuous blue;
Oh! the boots with 'fast' front lacings,
And with toes a 'work of art';
Oh! the boots, high-heeled and stately
That a grace of tread impart.

Boots or dresses, hats, what were they
To the faces—living flowers—
That smiled forth their bounteous beauty—
Charms to light the summer hours;
Faces, youthful in their features,
As the earliest blooms of spring,
With their tresses sunny auburn,
Or as black as raven's wing.

Oh! the eyes all gently shaded
Under lashes soft and long;
Oh! the eyes as dark as midnight
When the stars its spaces throng;
Oh! the eyes of fiery splendour,
Keen as diamonds in their light;
Oh! the eyes that trance all feelings—
Make them victims to their might.

Oh! the eyes that speak deep language,
When the timid lips are still;
Oh! the eyes as soft as moonlight,
Glistening on the mountain rill;
Oh! the eyes that summer feelings
Through all seasons seem to pour;
Oh! the eyes, bewitching, charming,
That we saw by Scarborough's shore.

Through the sunlight flew the sea-gulls
With their wings as marble white;
Through the sunlight gloomed the ruin
Of the castle on the height;
Through the sunlight flashed the bent sails
Of the port-bound distant ships;
Through the sunlight came the 'hail words'
Breathed by hardy seaman's lips.

But at length the veil of evening
Softly fell on sea and land:
Then the royal anthem sounded
Through its tones so deep and grand;
And the Spa was soon forsaken
By the gay and festal throng,
And the silence reigned unbroken
Save by linnet's sunset song.

THE ADVENTURES OF A LADY IN SEARCH OF A HORSE.

CHAPTER III.

'Shy she was, and I thought her cold,
Proud, and I fled o'er the sea ;
Filled I was with folly and spite,
While Ellen Adair was dying for me.'



IN treating of Gloriana and her 'adventures,' I must plead guilty to having hitherto bestowed more attention on the *horses* with which she was from time to time so artfully *saddled*, than on the young lady herself. And to repair so serious an error, I will proceed to give a description of my heroine, now (through the agency of Sir Erasmus, and those various steeds,

good, bad, and indifferent,) in the possession of glowing health, and of all the charms with which Nature had in her case been unusually lavish. She was, indeed, a beautiful girl; and she had also the great, and not very common advantage, of being very diffident and modest on the score of her own attractions. She had lived so secluded a life, with little or no society, but that of

her mother and sister, that she had not found the opportunity generally afforded to a girl of her age, of testing the value of their own beauty by the judgment of the world of men. And yet hers was a face that no one could pass, without longing to gaze again and again upon its rare and perfect loveliness. It had the charm and fascination, which an ever-varying expression alone can give. Animated or shy, merry or thoughtful, the countenance was in every changing mood the reflex and image of the pure and ingenuous mind. Her eyes, of a deep violet, shaded by their dark lashes, were

'Now brightly bold, now beautifully shy,'

and as eyes should be, they were the most attractive feature of her face. Her hair was luxuriant in quantity and rich in colour; her figure lithe and slender, and, now that she had recovered her health, upright as a dart, and indicative of the strength combined with slightness, which can alone be productive of genuine grace. 'She does look well on horseback,' had been the remark of all who had seen her, even on the sorry mounts—with the exception of poor Taffy—with which she had hitherto been accommodated.

I observed above that Gloriana had had as yet, no opportunity of testing the power of her own attractions over the hearts of the other sex; one, however, there had been who would have proved neither indifferent nor disloyal to them, had he received but the slightest encouragement from the lips of his youthful enslaver. The young Squire, Ralph Levison—who had become master of the Park, since the death of a distant relative, and who resided there with his sister, Miss Levison, a good-natured but weak single woman of a certain age—no sooner saw Gloriana, in her white dress and garden hat, pruning her roses at the 'Cottage,' which was situated within the boundaries of his own Park, than he fell desperately in love with the fair vision, and, acting upon the spur of an ingenuous nature, he lost little time in making his devotion apparent. At this stage of the proceedings,

however, his ardour had received a check; Gloriana was very shy, and she also possessed a great deal of that comparatively rare quality maidenly dignity; and being conscious in her own heart of a dawning partiality for their handsome neighbour and landlord, she thought it incumbent upon her to be less cordial and genial with him, than she would have been to a more commonplace and indifferent acquaintance. This line of conduct became more marked, in consequence of the garrulous twaddle of Miss Levison, the maiden sister, who was continually impressing upon the minds of 'the girls at the Cottage,' that 'her brother was looked upon as the catch of the country;' and that the advances which were made to him by mothers on the part of their daughters, and even by the daughters themselves, were absolutely '*shocking*.' '*Shocking*,' indeed, was Miss Levison's favourite condemnatory interjection; and according to her own account the revolutions to which her delicate organization was subjected, in the course of one day, must have been serious and overwhelming. She was very fond of talking of her brother, and, indeed, the whole affection of which she was capable, was concentrated in him; but owing to the natural love of deception and misrepresentation, to which all women who gossip, are more or less subject, she managed to do him more mischief, in a matter which affected his happiness, than she was at all aware of. He was young, ardent, and impulsive, and stung by the coldness of Gloriana's manner, he wished by some sudden attack to surprise her into emotion of one sort or another. He had with this intention enlisted his sister in his service, or rather believed that he had enlisted her, and that she had understood the real motive, in the proposal he had made to her of going abroad with him for six months—a proposal which had concluded with a faltering—'*in case*.' 'You will be going down to the Cottage this evening,' he added, after a pause; 'you can just mention our plans to them. I want to know particularly what they think

of it—what *she* thinks of it I mean,’ he said, raising his head with manly candour—he was not ashamed of his devotion, why should he disguise or deny it? ‘I will come in later and bring you home.’ Surely this was clear enough, and yet this delicate commission, which a clever woman *not* interested in the result, one way or another, would have managed in the most natural manner in the world, was so woefully bungled in the hands of Miss Levison, who *was* interested perhaps in the non-success of her brother’s suit, that it ended in the worst way possible for all parties interested or concerned in the matter. For when the Squire ‘dropped in’ at the Cottage on that lovely summer’s afternoon, in the hope of meeting with an inquiring or even reproachful glance from the violet eyes of the maiden whom he loved so ardently, he was not even favoured with their usual half-shy, half-conscious acknowledgment of his presence; but observed that they were steadily fixed in an opposite and apparently singularly unattractive direction. A cloud seemed to hang, indeed, over the spirits of the party; and while Mrs. Applegarde entertained her hearers with a story that had no beginning, and which did not seem likely to come to an end, two hearts which were struggling with the strength of their own emotions, had time to settle down into that cold and unlovely reticence—which might be compared to the placing of a mental Chubb’s lock, upon all the outlets of expression in the soul—so that two statues of stone, could not have revealed less, than did the inanimate forms of those whose destinies were trembling in the balance of fate. Ralph was the first to endeavour to place things on a more genial footing between himself, and his fair tenants of the Cottage. ‘What do you think of our plan for going abroad during the summer and autumn, Miss Applegarde?’ he said, as he joined her suddenly in a shrubby walk, whither she had wandered, as he fondly hoped, to allow him a ‘last appeal.’ The words were simple ones; but Gloriana was woman

enough to know all that they implied. Raising her beautiful eyes, however, coldly and calmly into her lover’s face, she merely replied, ‘*I think it is a very good one.*’ Then there was a short pause; it never occurred to either of them that ‘some one might have blundered’ in the delicate commission, with which that some one had been so confidently intrusted. An open explanation, a few kind words, and all might have been well; but in such cases the explanation is never made—the kind word never bestowed. Gloriana’s heart was on the point of relenting, as she saw something glitter for a moment in Ralph Levison’s eyes; but she was too late—the words she had said could not be recalled; she had accepted that cruel plan, at which her soul rebelled, as ‘*a very good one,*’ and the thing was done. With a powerful effort, he, too, mastered the emotion which had sharply stung his strong heart, and stretching out his hand, had said, ‘Thank you, Gloriana; you have done your best to cure me of my love for you. I will not harass you any more—good-bye;’ and before she was aware, he had raised her hand to his lips, and kissed it passionately. After that short interview, when he was gone whom she had loved well, although unconsciously, she thought of the tear that she had seen glittering in his eyes, and knowing what it must have cost him, the remembrance of it poisoned the sources of her life. She pined and drooped, and nobody knew what ailed her; but the shrewd London doctor, who read her secret at a glance, and who ordered her at once, as a remedy, something to do, something to think of—and, better than all, something that, above all other things, something that *he* took an interest in. This last clause was of course nothing more than a lucky hit—even the shrewd doctor’s powers of clairvoyance, did not reach so far into a mill-stone as that. The ‘exercise upon four legs’ had, indeed, turned out a sovereign remedy; for Gloriana had begun to rally from the day, that she had her first ride upon the kicking cob. Perhaps a letter

received from abroad not long afterwards, from the repentant maiden sister might have had something to do with her further recovery. 'We take a great interest,' it said, 'in everything concerning your riding. Ralph wants you to have the Welsh pony, which, he says, is quite quiet, and would carry you beautifully,' &c. &c.; for Ralph had heard that she was ill, and had forgiven even that cruel acquiescence with regard to the advantages of their foreign trip. After these revelations, the reader will not be surprised, that the visit to the Park was an agitating one to Gloriana. It seemed so like 'seeking him,' she thought, 'and yet it must be done because of poor Taffy—and my foolish pride deserves some punishment: it serves me right.'

Ralph Levison was proud also; but he was too generous and manly to let his pride interfere with his feelings of deference towards women—particularly towards unprotected women, like the widow and her two daughters. He was, therefore, on his way to the Cottage, as the sisters were on their way to the Park; and as they exchanged a warm, but rather shy greeting, Gloriana raised her tearful eyes to his face, and said, 'Oh! Mr. Levison, I do not know what to say to you, or how to meet you—poor Taffy is dead. I killed him.'

'*You killed him?*' repeated Mr. Levison, after her; but it would appear as if the pony's death had scarcely affected him to the extent which it ought to have done, for Gloriana was in no haste to remove her hand from his, and if her manner was shy, there was no trace of pride or coldness now.

'Yes, I killed him,' she replied, solemnly; 'I gave him too much corn, and brought on inflammation, and I am as sorry that he died, as if he had been my brother.'

This confession came out with a sob, and she quite started with surprise when the unlooked-for answer was returned—

'I am glad of it, Gloriana, if our quarrel is to be made up over his grave.'

'Oh! you must not be glad, in

deed you must not,' was the eager reply; 'our quarrel was made up long before, and you must not be glad that poor Taffy died.'

Just at that moment Ralph Levison had no other wish but to be glad or sorry, as she was glad or sorry, in whom his heart delighted. It was the happiest moment of his life, and I fear that the memory of Taffy was like a pleasant essence in his nostrils, since it had thrown down the icy barriers of coldness and pride, which had been built up between himself and Gloriana, and established their friendship on the old footing of candour and genial unreserve. From that day there were no more misunderstandings, no more intrusting of important missions to the fatal third party, who invariably bungles in a love affair. Gloriana had found out, through bitter experience, that her own happiness was bound up in that of Ralph Levison's, and he had long been aware of the truth, that his depended entirely upon her; so as a natural consequence, before a week had gone over their heads, it was one of those widely diffused secrets, that every one knows, that the young Squire and Miss Applegarde were engaged to be married.

Miss Levison had unwillingly made up her mind, at last, that it must come to this; and tried to persuade herself that she had had her brother's happiness at heart, even when she had informed Gloriana, on the important evening described above, that her brother had made up his mind to go abroad, because he was so persecuted by the matrimonial snares which mothers and daughters were laying for his bachelorhood in the county. It was a good trait in her future sister's character, that, although often reproached by her now happy lover, for the cruel coldness of the words which had driven him from her side, she never betrayed his sister's treachery to him; but, on the contrary, did everything in her power to conciliate her, and make her feel as little as possible the difference in position, which her brother's wife would have it in her power to make, if so inclined. 'Let bygones be

bygones,' she would say, gravely, when the subject was bruited; 'and tell me, Ralph, what am I to ride to-day—Birdseye, or War Eagle, or Hetty, or The O'Donoghue?' for there was hardly a horse in the Park stables, that Gloriana had not mounted and ridden, under the auspices of her sporting squire.

'I have ordered War Eagle for you to-day, if you will promise to ride steadily; but she is getting dreadfully wild,' he added, turning to Mrs. Applegarde; 'she will beat me across country soon.'

'I am not afraid as long as you are with her,' was the reply. 'I cannot say that I quite liked her cantering about the country, by herself; but James did so set his face against a groom.'

'James is a muff,' replied the reckless Ralph; 'and how he could allow you to be so cheated by that rascal Ned, I can't conceive.'

For the stable expenses, during the time of that worthy's reign and rule, had been submitted by Mrs. Applegarde to the critical inspection of her future son-in-law. 'My dear lady,' he had remarked, after running his eye down the items, and arriving at the wonderful total, which the ingenuity of 'Knowing Ned' had run up, 'all I can say is, that you must have been keeping up a hunting establishment at the Cottage during my absence: how many breakfasts have you given to the hunt? and when did you pay up your last subscription to the hounds?'

'Was it not shameful?' said Gloriana, with her face in a glow. 'I could have forgiven him all that, though, if he had not made me believe that I killed Taffy; but that was really sinful.'

'Here comes War Eagle,' said Kate, who had been on the watch; and the stately horse came stepping like a stag down the Park glade. 'He is a real beauty. Oh, Glory! I envy you your ride to-day, and only wish that I had the courage to get upon a horse's back.'

'We must teach you,' said her future brother; 'but how is it, Kate, that you are such a little coward, when Glory is afraid of nothing?'

'I remember when she was afraid of you,' said Kate, who never missed a favourable opportunity for repartee; 'and where is your chair?' she added saucily to her sister, as War Eagle exhibited signs of impatience, and began some stately curvetting at the door, 'to help you to get up, you know, as Wells used to say.'

Gloriana frowned slightly at the merry girl, to deprecate all chaff in the presence of the grooms, and poising her foot lightly in Ralph's hand, the getting up was easily disposed of; in a second she was in the saddle, and appeasing the impatience of War Eagle by patting him on his glossy neck, and speaking to him low, honied words of love and admiration, to which he seemed to listen with the condescension of a prince of the blood. War Eagle was a powerful, thorough-bred horse, and as he bounded with long strides over the elastic turf, his nostrils dilated, and his eye flashed, and he looked as if his untamed spirit would prove too much for the girlish form, and slender hands, of his rider to subdue. Equal to the occasion, however, Gloriana's colour rose, and eager with excitement and with her own overflowing happiness, she exclaimed—

'Oh! let me take him over something, Ralph; you know you promised that I should.'

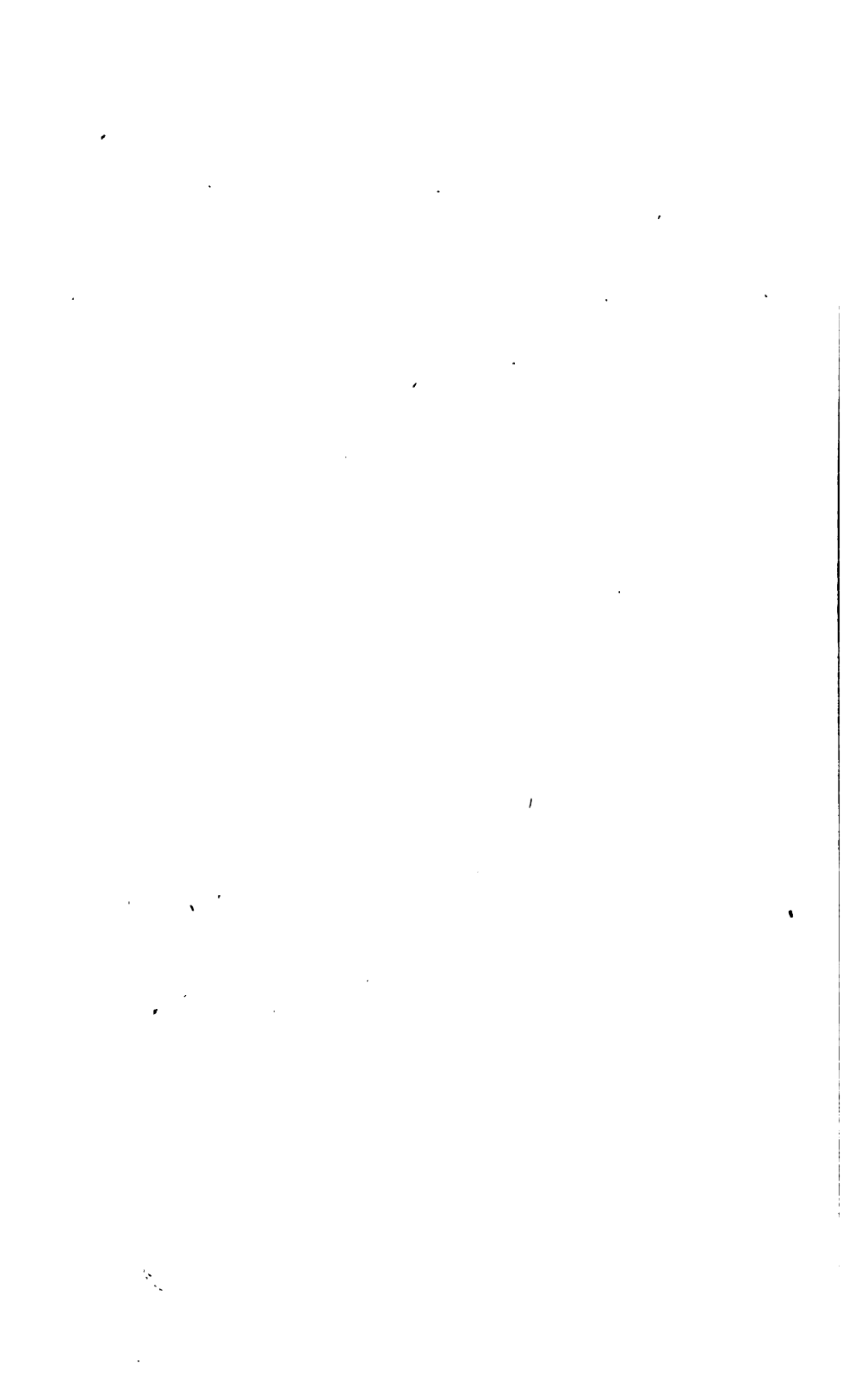
'I don't know,' was the reply; 'he is pulling you enough as it is: he gets mad sometimes when he thinks that he is to go.'

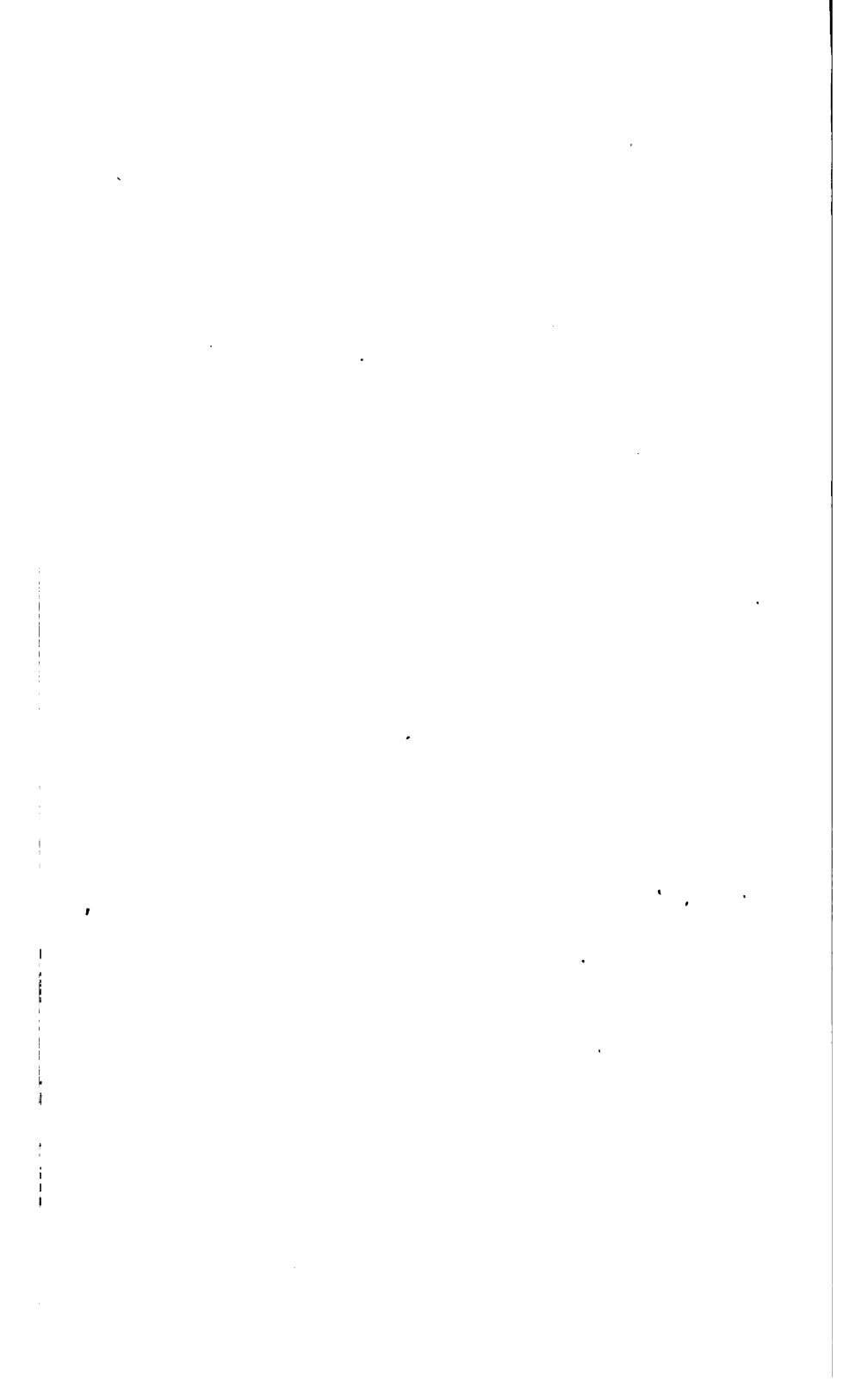
'So do I; let us go together. There is a nice little fence that I used to take Taffy over, just at the end of the glade; just this once, Ralph, please,' she added coaxingly, and receiving no positive injunction to the contrary, she rode steadily on in the direction of the fence.

'Don't interfere with him,' was all the caution she received; 'he'll do it himself.'

The good horse, indeed, wanted no hint that his rider could give him on the subject; he dropped gently on the other side of the fence, with his fair burden safe on his back.

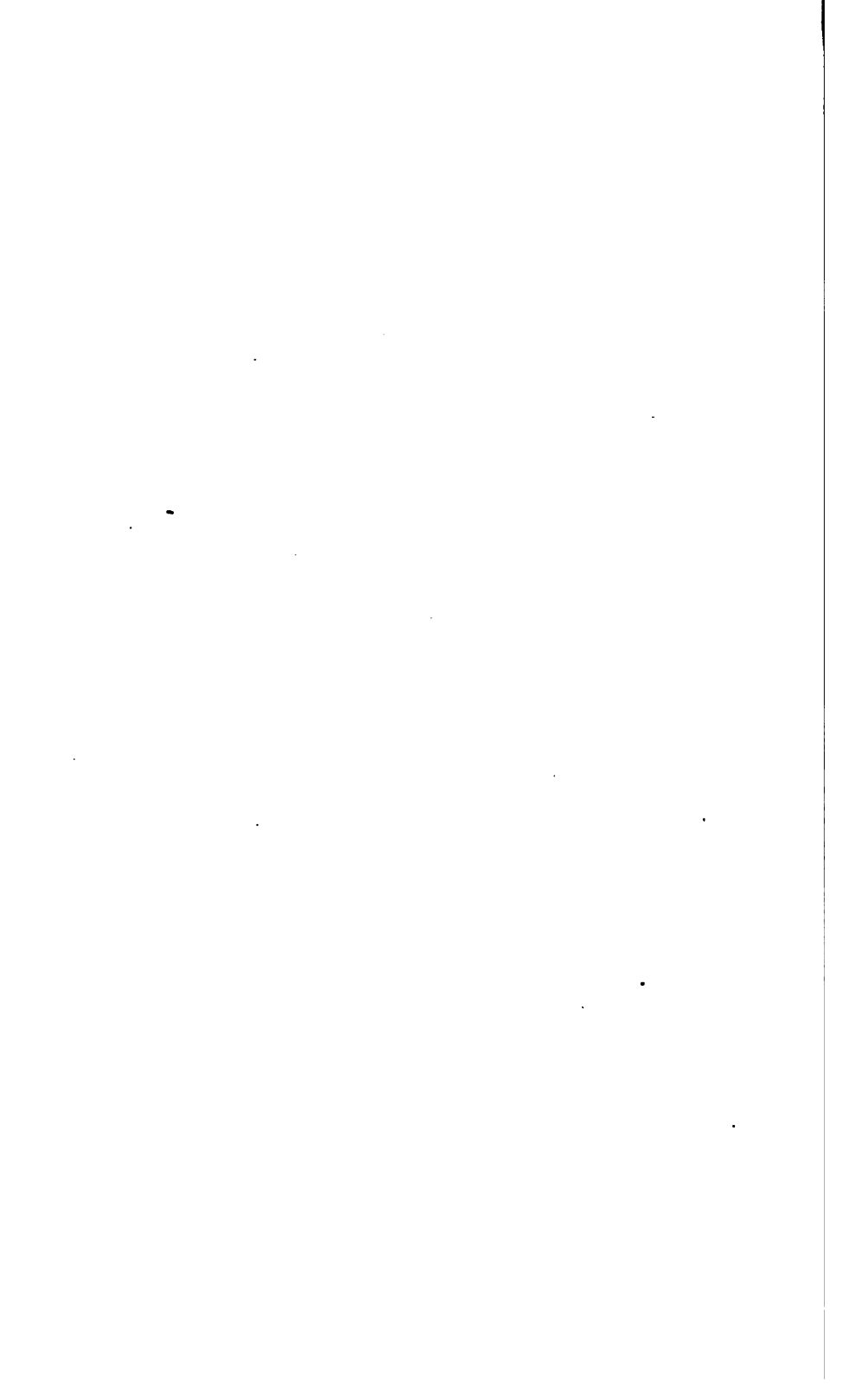
'Oh, it is glorious!' she exclaimed, as she followed Ralph upon Birds-







GLORIANA TAKING THE BROOK



eye, across the open fallow. 'Oh! I should enjoy a day with the hounds.'

'That is what I was afraid of,' said the young Squire, gravely; and he will perhaps be set down as very strait-laced and particular by his sporting brethren, when I admit that, with all his own love of sport, and admiration of courage in men and women, he disliked the idea of seeing young, gentle, refined women *habitués* of the hunting-field. 'That is what I was afraid of,' he said; and then he added still more seriously, 'Gloriana, you will oblige me very much if you will never ask me to let you hunt—you know I can refuse you nothing.'

'I will never mention the subject again, if you dislike it,' she replied; 'but I thought you would have liked it—that is, if you knew that I could ride.' This she said doubtfully, and inquiringly—she thought that his remark contained an imputation upon her riding—and feeling herself a novice in the art, she was perhaps a little hurt.

'It is because I think you ride so well, that I should dislike it for you. I could not bear to have *you* the object of vulgar admiration and comment. Do you understand me, now, Glorry?'

'I do, indeed, and I should dislike it above all things, myself,' she said, blushing at the very idea.

'I cannot fancy either you or Kate ever becoming fast young ladies; you would not have believed that of me, perhaps, who am a sportsman to the backbone; but masculine women are my favourite aversion. I should have offered you War Eagle before now,' he added; 'but he does not come up to my standard of a lady's horse—he requires too much strength for graceful riding.'

'He does, indeed,' said Gloriana, who had found during the last gallop, that he was rather too much for her; 'he is quite quiet, but very hard to hold.'

The words were scarcely uttered, before the horse, starting at a man in a hedge-row, broke away with Gloriana, and proceeded with great strides across the open meadow, in the direction of a wide brook that

ran through it. He was not going at his full speed, but he was running away, inasmuch as she could not stop him. She did not, however, lose her nerve or her presence of mind; but turning her head, she said to Ralph, who kept a little in the wake, knowing what the horse was when he was collared, 'I am not frightened; but I can't hold him. Will he jump the brook?'

'Yes; give him his head, and let him go; then pull him with all your strength, and turn his head towards me.'

Gloriana obeyed these instructions carefully, and no sooner found herself safe on the other side, than with a final effort she pulled the horse round, while Birdseye gallantly clearing the brook also, brought Ralph to her rescue, who caught her bridle at once in his firm and secure grasp. The next moment she was lifted gently, but quickly to the ground.

'We must change saddles,' Ralph said, his own face pale as death, while Gloriana's was glowing with pleasure and excitement. 'You have proved your courage sufficiently now, and your seat too. Well done, Gloriana!' he added, warming now that the fright was over. 'You are worthy of your name; that brook has turned half a field of good riders before now.'

'Has it?' she replied innocently; 'I should like to do it again; it was only like a very long stride.'

'No, thank you. I must say that in cold blood I should prefer the bridge,' said Ralph, laughing; and as they rode home, he said, 'Your adventures in search of a horse have been very amusing, Glorry; but I hope they are nearly over now.'

The following day was Gloriana's nineteenth birthday, and this family secret had of course been betrayed to one so nearly interested as Ralph Levison. He had a present in store for the lady of his love, of which she had not the most distant idea. The secret had been well kept, for the simple reason that it had been confided to no one. The young Squire was rich and generous, and it was not likely that he would withhold his lavish hand, when money could

purchase enjoyment for one he so dearly loved. 'My present is the last, but not in one sense of the word the *last*,' he said, after heartily congratulating the young heroine of the day. 'Come to the door, Glorry, and tell me what you think of the Paragon. He's the best that can be had for love or money,' only, he added, turning laughingly to Kate, 'he *won't* stand a chair; and if his "strength lies in his head" it is concentrated into a very small space.' This last remark was for the especial benefit of Mr. Wills, who was no longer the only male prop of the Applegarde family. He felt the loss of position severely; but the splendour of the match, which his beloved young mistress was about to make, acted as balm to his wounded heart; and although he winced a little under the raileries of the Squire, he yielded the palm to him

with a pretty good grace, as far, at least, as horses were concerned. There is nothing more to be said of Paragon than that he was perfection, as his name implied. Perfect in his paces, with the courage of a lion and the gentleness of a dove; his mouth, his temper, his shape, his legs, his head, his eyes, his mane, his tail, his colour, his pedigree—all made him worthy of his name and of his mistress; who, as she turned, in the exuberance of her joy, to thank her lover for his munificent gift, said, 'Oh! what a dear old man was Sir Erasmus when he ordered me exercise upon four legs; and what a divine horse was Brutus, who, when he kicked me off on the common, commenced a series of adventures, which have ended,' she added, softly, and with eyes beaming with affection, 'which have ended in Paragon and you.'

GOSSIP FOR THE HOLIDAYS.

IS there anything in the world more delightful than gossip? It is the charm of evenings passed in country houses, of *réunions* in town, the agreeability of *vis-à-vis* in railways, of partners in quadrilles, of companions walking, riding, shooting, fishing; at breakfast, dinner, and at billiards. If politics be the solid port of conversation, travel the East India sherry, guns and horses the burgundy, flirtation the marschino, and polemical disputation the raw brandy, then is gossip—cheery, chatty, charming gossip—the light, bright, sparkling champagne!

Of course this great power can be abused, and gossip from unskilful lips may degenerate into a bald, blank bore. That Smith has got his appointment for India, and sails on the 15th, that Brown has parted with his mare, that Jones is about to let his house, and Robinson to get his troop, may be of interest to Smith's, Brown's, Jones', and Robinson's particular friends, but the world at large cannot be accused of heartlessness if it refuses to suspend

its breath at the ventilation of those startling facts. Gossip for the world should be of the great, and of the great with whom we are not too familiar.

Blessed be the man who invented photographic albums, for he was a benefactor to society. We propose to endeavour to render a similar service, and to present a sort of biographical kaleidoscope, in which the little bits of coloured glass are represented by anecdotes of the celebrities of Paris for more than the last half-century.

First, of Béranger, who needs no introduction to make him interesting. This gifted poet was the most modest genius of all. His mania was to preserve his incognito, and he shunned his popularity by dwelling in ten different quarters of Paris, and several provincial towns; but the royalty of the *bon roi d'Yvetot* always declared itself. At Vincennes he assumed the name of Bonnin, but in vain. On his birthday the great ones of the city surprised the good woman in whose house he lodged by presenting them-

selves with congratulations, chaplets, and garlands. One of the plagues of his existence was the perpetual assault upon his slender purse by the crowd of unfortunates who write. Not a single manufacturer of bad couplets ever spared him a supplication, concluding always with a quotation from his own works. Passy was his favourite retreat, for close by was the charming Bois de Boulogne; and every week he gave a dinner, to which was invited Chateaubriand, Lamennais, Lacordaire, George Sand, and others of the like genius. What gorgeous gossip must have flown from lip to lip at these frugal repasts!

But these pleasures were too bright to last. The Municipal Council in full state, Monsieur le Maire at their head, waited on him to inform him that by reason of the lustre his presence shed on Passy it had conceded to him gratuitously and perpetually the right of occupying at his death the best place in the cemetery.

Béranger was so touched by this attention that he fled Passy immediately, and took up his abode in the Quartier du Luxembourg, Rue d'Enfer.

Despite warnings and censorship, the poets and literary men of France cannot complain of want of social recognition. During the first years of the present empire a lady, a great lady, a *very great lady*, 'in short,' as Mr. Micawber would say, 'the empress,' desired Monsieur Mérimée, the senator and academician, to call upon Béranger 'de le saluer de sa part,' and to tell him that she ardently desired to see him and receive him. The poet, surprised, flattered, and embarrassed, replied with all sorts of excuses. He was unaccustomed to empresses; he only desired in his old age, and at the end of his career, to live in quiet obscurity. He requested to be relieved of an honour which, &c., &c.

Her imperial majesty, on receiving this reply, sent back to him to say that 'as he would not call on her, she would visit him.'

It would have been a sight worth seeing, that meeting between the old poet and the young empress. Those

who have had the good fortune to see that august lady smile, can judge of its effect upon Béranger.

A propos of royal personages, the life of the last Duchess of Parma is a melancholy proof of the truth of the adage that uneasy lies the head that wears a crown. While in her cradle her father, the Duc de Berri, was assassinated before her mother's eyes. She had not reached her tenth year when the revolution of July forced her family to quit France. Nine years afterwards, the prince, her husband, struck to death, expired in her arms, and since then she has been compelled to abandon the duchy, to which she had been recalled for a brief time by the counter revolution.

What a life! And in its course how many thousand obscure and happy ones have envied her!

There is a pleasant story of how the great Balzac was confined for a week in the Hôtel des Haricots, the disciplinary prison of the National Guard.

In the height of his popularity, Balzac, like Béranger, sought to avoid visitors. To this end he hired rooms under the assumed name of Madame Dupont. To which place Leon Gozlan, who discovered his retreat, once addressed a letter—

'A Madame Dupont
'(née Balzac).'

At this time the great novelist served in the National Guard, which institution he held in horror, and he believed that by hiding he should relieve himself of his odious duty; but civil-military law knows no respect for persons, and at his recognized home the proper authorities had 'filed' all the summonses and orders that precede the incarceration of refractory and inattentive national-guardsmen. Of these, of course, Madame Dupont knew nothing.

The sergeant-major of the company which had the honour of inscribing De Balzac on its muster-roll was by trade a hairdresser and perfumer. Enraged at the illustrious writer for his revelation of several of the inner secrets of hair-dressery and perfumery in his novel of 'César Birotteau,' the military bar-

ber resolved to avenge the 'trade' and the troop. All that he wanted was to catch the novelist in the street, for domicile is inviolable.

One morning, while Balzac was writing one of his wonderful 'Incarnations de Vautrin,' his servant entered his study and informed him that a box containing an Etruscan vase had just arrived below; that the porter, after three days' search, had discovered that M. de Balzac was staying *chez* Madame Dupont. Inspired by curiosity and love of the artistic, the great author ran down stairs in his dressing-gown. A man, carrying a case, stood at the door. Balzac stepped into the street.

'Trapped!' cried the sergeant-major perruquier, at the same moment avenging his own art and his prisoner's want of patriotism.

Away went the sham porter and the sham box. In vain Balzac pointed to his robe-de-chambre and slippers. The barber-sergeant was inexorable. A crowd assembled, and the author of the 'Comédie Humaine' was marched off.

Much has been recently written of oriental subtlety, of the fine observation and pregnant apprehension of the Eastern races; but perhaps the wily Asiatic is sometimes 'sold' by the simple European. When Said Pacha was in Paris he sent for a celebrated jeweller, and thus addressed him:—

'Before I leave France, I desire to present some of your chiefs, who have honoured me by their sympathy and attention, with a trifling proof of my esteem. Have you a dozen and a half of gold snuff-boxes set with diamonds of the value of about four thousand francs each?'

'Your highness,' replied the jeweller, 'at this present moment I have only by me six of the description you desire; but if your highness will deign to begin by the presentation of those six, in a few days I will supply you with six others, which you also can distribute; and in a week or so after that, I will complete the order by bringing the remaining half-dozen.'

'Be it so. Let me have the first six immediately.'

The snuff-boxes were delivered,

and the Pacha distributed them, accompanied by letters orientally polite. A few days passed, and the jeweller was again announced.

'Your highness,' he said, 'according to my promise I have the honour of bringing you six more snuff-boxes.'

'Good! When shall I have the others?'

'As soon as your highness has given away these.'

'Good! My secretary shall send them off immediately.'

'In that case, your highness, I will do myself the honour to wait on you again in three or four days.'

The second six were sent to the honoured recipients, and the indefatigable jeweller soon brought the others.

That is to say, not all; he only brought five.

'Your jewellery has given me the highest satisfaction,' said the gracious Oriental; 'and the friends who have done me the honour to accept them are equally delighted, for I have received from all of them—but one—letters expressing the liveliest thanks.'

'All but one! Was your highness kind enough to say all but one?' asked the jeweller.

'Yes. My secretary tells me that when the box was sent to his house, the chief was not in town, which explains his not having favoured me with his acknowledgments. He returns on Sunday. But how is it you have only brought me five boxes to-day? My list of presents is made out, and I must not leave one chief without the compliment I have paid to others.'

The jeweller paused for a moment, and then said, 'Did not your highness say that the recipient of your munificence who had not yet acknowledged your gift, would be in Paris on Sunday?'

'Yes: and I take my departure on Saturday.'

'Then if your highness will graciously leave me the name of the eighteenth personage you desire to honour, I will take care that on Monday, or Tuesday at the latest, he receives your highness's gift.'

'Between this and then you think

you can furnish the eighteenth box?"

"I can, your highness."

"It must in all points be exactly like the others, for I must not make any invidious distinction."

"Your highness will graciously acknowledge that of the half-dozens I have hitherto presented each one is precisely similar."

"True."

"I give your highness my word of honour that this last shall be as exactly like its predecessors."

"Good! My secretary will pay you seventy-two thousand francs."

The odd part of the story is, that if any prince, viceroy, or travelling magnifico staying in Paris should wish to present his admirers with diamond snuff-boxes, he will find half a dozen at the shop of the celebrated jeweller who had the honour and profit of supplying Said Pacha; and what is still more extraordinary, they are all exactly similar to those made for, sold to, and presented by that potentate.

Who composed the *Marseillaise*? We know from the authority of Sheridan's Mrs. Puff how possible it is for two great authors to hit upon the same idea, but that two composers should hit upon the same air requires an amount of credulity beyond us. Here is evidence, conflicting enough to puzzle the most intelligent of special juries.

M. Alexandre Boucher, who was born in the year 1770 was a celebrated violinist. He was also remarkable for an astonishing resemblance to the first Napoleon.

"In '92," says M. Boucher, "I spent an evening in the Faubourg St. Germain at the Hôtel de Montaigne, Rue de la Chaise. During the soirée, a colonel who was on the point of departure for Marseilles to join his regiment, took leave of the mistress of the house. Madame de Montaigne introduced us.

"I am charmed to meet you," said the colonel, "and I shall profit by the introduction by asking you to compose a march for my regiment—a *l'improviste*, if possible."

"I sought to excuse myself. I objected that I had no music-paper; and a guest ruled a sheet of ordinary

paper with a pencil. Madame de Montaigne supplicated, and at last I yielded, wrote the march, and the colonel departed with it in his pocket. I had not even time to arrange it. When the colonel arrived at Marseilles he gave it to the bandmaster; it was played on parade, and became the favourite march of the regiment.

"About this time Rouget de l'Isle (the reputed author and composer of the '*Marseillaise*') was imprisoned for political causes in Fort St. Jean in Marseilles. His gaoler, seeing that he occupied himself incessantly in writing verses, one day said to him—

"*Mon officier, why not write a song in honour of our armies? The Marseillais neither like the words nor the air of the 'Carmagnole,' but there is a march the band plays every day—a quick, stirring, inspiring air—every one is singing it. Why not write words to it?*"

"The imprisoned soldier set himself to work, and his words were adopted by the crowd who had before adopted my air.

"Judge of my astonishment when in the "*Marseillaise*" I recognized the march I had written at the Hôtel de Montaigne. It came from Marseilles, and was naturally called the '*Marseillaise*.' If, as biographers have stated, Rouget de l'Isle had composed it at Strasbourg for the departure of the volunteers of the army of the Rhine, it would have been called the "*Strasbourgeoise*."

"Years after I was dining in Paris, and Rouget de l'Isle sat beside me. Having so long heard his name coupled with my compositions, I looked at him with considerable curiosity, and complimented him with marked significance upon his famous words.

"But you don't speak of the music," said he. "Your opinion, as a great musician, is of value. Does it not please you?"

"Yes."

"You must know, then, that the air is not mine. It is a march of I don't know who, that was played at Marseilles when I was prisoner there during the Terror."

"I soon convinced him that I was

the composer, and after congratulating me, he said—

"You are for ever robbed of the fame of your own work, for though I proclaim you the composer, the words and air are so inseparable that no one will believe me!"

"Keep all the fame yourself," I answered. "But for your genius my little march would be forgotten, or played sometimes in a garrison town. You have ennobled, sublimed it, and it has become yours by the power of poetic absorption!"

Thus for M. Alexandre Boucher. On the other hand a letter from M. Norriol, of the Library of Strasbourg, protests 'against the fable, prompted by *amour-propre*, told by M. Boucher. It was in '92, says M. Norriol, and within the walls of Strasbourg that the sublime Hymn of Liberty was composed, and it was inserted in the "Affiches de Strasbourg," on the 7th of July of the same year, and was entitled, "Chant de Guerre pour l'armée du Rhin, dédié au Maréchal Luckner." Copies of this journal still exist which prove this fact. From Strasbourg the hymn spread rapidly through the departments, and it was first sung in Paris by the volunteers of Marseilles as they entered the city gates. It was christened the "Marseillaise" by the Parisians themselves.

We have heard, too, that the illustrious composer is so delighted with the singing of our thoroughly English Mr. Santley, that he intends to offer him one of the chief rôles in the forthcoming opera.

The hand of improvement is ruthless, even in Paris, where sentiment has its share in councils imperial, senatorial, and municipal, and the house in which Monsieur and Madame Emile de Girardin held their celebrated *réunion* is now abandoned to the pickaxe. In that famous salon, Musset, Victor Hugo, de Vigny, Balzac, Sainte-Beuve, and Lamartine were constant guests. It was there that deputies and academicians were made and unmade. It was a power in the Paris, which is a power in the world.

Madame de Girardin, whom Chateaubriand called *la Muse de là*

Patrie, though an authoress, felt the deepest affection for her husband, the most entire confidence in his energy and talents, and always fought upon his side with the ferocious tenderness of her sex. It is said that since he entered the arena of politics and literature, M. de Girardin has neither torn nor burned a single letter—that they are all sorted and stacked in alphabetical and chronological order, with copies of the replies sent to them. What a collection! How many people in high places must mourn M. de Girardin's care and caution, and wish that they could buy, beg, borrow, or steal those dreadful pieces of written paper, that form an *unprinted* library of documents of and from all sorts of persons, under three governments, and during a succession of unprecedented and unforeseen events! What materials for a work on Modern History for some Parisian Macaulay!

How singular is the public of women of letters on the Continent, and how dissimilar to the domesticity of our own fireside novelists and poetesses! In 1827, Madame de Girardin, then Mademoiselle Delphine Gay, and at the charming age of three-and-twenty 'assisted' at a dinner given by the ambassador of France to some naval officers who had rescued several captives from Algiers. During dessert she recited some verses inspired by the event—verses which caused so strong an excitement that she was received at the capital as a member of the Academy of the Tiber. Charles X. accorded her a pension for her *Chant du Sacre*, which she soon forfeited by another *chant*, in which the chief of the expedition to Algiers was treated with a licence which the minister considered past the bounds of the poetic.

It was not enough for Madame de Girardin to fight upon her husband's side. She did it openly, avowedly, and publicly. She proclaimed herself his partisan. While de Girardin was suffering from the rigours of the Coup d'Etat, 'Lady Tartuffe' was produced at the Théâtre Français. On the first night of its performance, the most critical audience in

Europe stamped it an unequivocal success. 'Author! author!' cried the *parterre*. Régnier advanced before the curtain and mentioned the name of 'Madame de Girardin!'

'*Emile! Emile!* tell them Madame *Emile* de Girardin,' cried the authoress, imperiously.

Who had ever heard of Madame de Girardin? Madame *Emile* de Girardin was her husband's wife, and must be known for such!

In society, as in her works, Madame de Girardin—we beg pardon, Madame *Emile* de Girardin—always was a lady. Authorship and popularity never unsexed her manners or her habits. The delicate hand with which she wrote was gloved—and through all the brilliant force of her creations there is no trace of hard and naked knuckles.

Alas! that physical pain should have rendered the last days of such a life almost a martyrdom.

Here is a dialogue between a lady of fashion and Monsieur Guizot.

'My dear Monsieur Guizot, you seem weary with everything, as if your heart, and mind, and spirit were fatigued. How is this? What can you desire? For years you have occupied the thoughts of Europe, inspired your name in history, and been a king of men, and leader of monarchy. In your retirement you are honoured and illustrious. No other is high enough for you to envy. Then whence this lassitude, this sadness, this hypochondria? Are you ill?'

'No, madame, but I would forget!'

'Forget!'

'Yes, I would tear a thousand pages from out the book of my life—pages filled with the records of others, but which neither gave nor give me any happiness.'

'Is it possible you can be dissatisfied with your magnificent career?'

'Were my time to come over again' (it must be understood that this anecdote comes direct from the lady who heard the avowal), 'and I were free to choose my lot, I would be a man without either political or social duties, responsible but for my own conduct, without too many

relations or friends, without any endowments of talent, but simply those of common sense; without nerves, and with a good digestion and a little egotism, entirely without ambition, living on a modest, solid independence, drawn, say from rents in the Boulevards of Paris, or Regent Street in London; so that I could be a calm, unimpassioned, disinterested spectator of passing events.'

'Then,' asked the lady, 'what would be your dream, your desires, your employment, your pastime?'

'To see the passions and agitations of others. As for glory—Puff!'

And this is the verdict of a man who has known all and seen all—who has taken a bird's-eye view of empires from the lofty heights of his own genius.

Hydraulic pressure is known to be a great power, and the Duc de Morny, years ago, put it to a new use, and successfully pierced the thick skin of a vulgarian. The *nouveau riche* in question gave dinners, and always reserved for himself and his wife a certain exquisite vintage of Léoville which the famous house of Clossman of Bordeaux sold him for a louis the bottle. The servant who stood behind his master's chair had secret orders to manœuvre with this particular wine, so that the guests, although served with the best, never tasted the Leoville.

M. de Morny, informed of this fact, watched the servant, and marked his clever manipulation of the bottle. The man asked him—

'Hermitage?'

The count replied, pointing to the place where the bottle was secreted, loudly—'I prefer Leoville.'

The man looked at his master, who, seeing that he was discovered, made the best of it.

'Don't you hear? the count prefers Leoville.'

The precious bottle was brought from its hiding-place, and the count's wineglass slowly filled—the host, his wife, and all the guests observing the operation with deep interest.

M. de Morny poured the contents.

of the small glass into his tumbler, filled it up leisurely with water, and drank it as if it were only ordinary wine.

It must have been a dreadful moment for Monsieur and Madame, the host and hostess.

The life of any man, written as it really happened, would be the most interesting work published since the first edition of 'Robinson Crusoe,' and the life of a celebrity, written on the same photographic principle,

would be still more curious; but as this autobiography never can and never will be written, we must content ourselves with any unpublished anecdotes of past and present celebrities furnished by good authorities: and those of our readers who are pleased with the few we have recounted, will find more of the same sort in a charming little book, entitled 'Le Perron de Tortoni,' recently published by Monsieur Jules Lecomte.

THE PLAYGROUNDS OF EUROPE :

Swiss Scenes and Sites.

HALF an hour too soon is better than half a minute too late. Therefore, a good many minutes before one in the afternoon, we are on the deck of the little steamer lying at the end of the little jetty in the little port of Neuchâtel. Everything is so pretty, and on so small a scale, that we seem to be playing at being outward bound for a long voyage. The Mediterranean we are about to traverse (the Neuenburger Sea, or Sea) is full four weary miles across. Then we are to thread a strait, La Broye, at least five times as broad as our vessel; and then we are to cross another Mediterranean, the Murten See or Lake of Morat, perhaps a mile and a quarter wide. I play at being steward and supercargo; my companions are supposed to be young ladies going to Australia under my charge. To avoid the horrors of famine when far out at sea, we are profusely victualled. Our provisions, contained in a faithful wicker basket which has never yet deserted us, consist of a penny roll, three slices of bread and butter, six pears, a knife and fork, a bottle of wine and water ready mixed, a white-metal cup, a napkin of all-work, and a newspaper table-cloth. Were we wild Indians with untutored minds, instead of English who have been to boarding-school, it would be part of our creed that, in our posthumous travels, admitted to an equal sky, that faithful basket would bear us company.

Being early, we have time to look about us. While admiring the way in which the Neuchâtelois (i. e. the good folk of Neuchâtel), pinched for building-room, are encroaching on the Lake by fitting up its shallow edge with heaps of broken stone, the railway-

whistle screams close at hand, the mail-train from Pontarlier arrives, and in a few minutes come the liveried postmen, heavy laden with all sorts and sizes of packages, evidently not containing bank notes and love-letters exclusively. For the Swiss Post Office is also a Parcels Delivery and a Pickford Waggon—a most convenient combination for tourists. If you travel with a feather bed and a chest of drawers, you can send them on from town to town by post, properly directed and enclosed if you like in patent adhesive envelopes, while you lightly wander, hither and thither, on horseback or on foot.

As the last bit of lumber is being delivered on deck, there come rushing down from the heights of the town—down the stone steps, down the steep streets—with the apparent intention of breaking their necks, a man and a woman in Sunday clothing. He all in broadcloth, with chimney-pot hat; she in Bernese costume, with snowy kerchief low in front and silver jack-chains dangling plenteously behind. They run with accelerated velocity gained by their descent; they put on still more steam. Like rival racers, they devour the ground and scatter dust and pebbles behind them. In another minute they might be on board; but the Post is inexorable. The tongue of the steamer's bell gives one single stroke. They are crossing the quay; the paddles begin to move. They are at the foot of the jetty; the steamer makes the least little way. They are at the end of the jetty, red and panting; a watery chasm, slowly widening, cuts off all their hopes of starting. We are off; and they are too late.

Fare ye well, O fleet-footed pair! and

make in your note-book some brief memorandum touching the virtue of punctuality. That last glass of small white wine, that final bit of gossip, have cost you dear. You can't go to the fête of Sugi, to which your uncles and aunts have invited you. Your cousins will sing and shout without you. In vain will your friends look for you over the bridge as we pass beneath. You have lost a good dinner and a supper too. And everybody on board knows it, and has the cruelty to laugh.

We are really off, bounding over the waves. Neuchâtel grows less and less. Our Hôtel du Lac becomes first a doll's house, and then an undistinguishable speck in the patch of colour which marks the site of the town. The Jura, behind it, rises higher and higher. Some of the ridges open, showing their rounded backs and the gaps in which the valleys between them must lie. The nearer we get to the middle of the lake, the higher we bound; for that abominable south-west wind, which drives grains of rain in our face like a charge of small shot, has had a range of some five-and-twenty miles, all the way from Yverdun, to get up an agitation and excite the billows, till they threaten to make us play at being Seesick in earnest.

We near the welcome shore where the Lake of Morat discharges its waters into that of Neuchâtel, displaying Nature's mode of converting pool first into swamp and then into plain. The steamer, after skirting beds of mud, enters a channel (kept navigably open by a dredging machine) which traverses a wide marsh. The marsh is of modern or recent origin. The materials, which are scraped and scaled from the hills by frost and rain, are deposited when carried by the stream into the still expanse of waters. The Lake of Neuchâtel is already shallow. It freezes near the shore in winter. But from this continual carting in of alluvial sediment, it will one day, comparatively near at hand—not next year, nor next century, but at quite an imaginable future date—become solid dry land, with a river running through it. The substance stolen from the mountains by every shower, must eventually convert both the Lakes of Morat and Neuchâtel into fields of waving wheat or whatever alimentary cereal shall be most in esteem by the representatives of the human race at that coming period. Quadrupeds will trot where fish once glided; men will push wheelbarrows where they once pulled cars; families will sleep in security where

families never slept since the world began.

The process is quite gradual, and not sudden in any way. It might naturally be supposed that all the deep parts of a lake would be filled up first, so that, by the whole bottom's slowly rising together, a time would come when the entire lake would be converted into a shallow lagune, and then into a swamp; but it is not so. The swamp, and the marsh, and the meadow, and the alluvial land, encroach and grow into the lake from one end only—the point of influx of a stream—and advance steadily, driving out the mass of water before them, and banishing the liquid from its former realm. It is exactly like the filling up of an oblong pond with rubbish constantly shot in at one single spot, and by continually carting more over that already deposited, until the work is complete. The formation of a railway embankment gives a good idea of the manner in which it is done, if you only substitute the agency of water for that of waggons and wheelbarrows.

All the Swiss lakes more or less display examples of the same changes going on. What a large piece of the head of the Lake of Geneva (between Villeneuve and Boveret) has been filled up by the Rhone! The lovely Lake of Thun is inconveniently choked by the pebbly deltas of the torrents which feed it. The whole tongue of land between the Lakes of Thun and Brienz, namely, the site on which Interlaken and Unterseen stand, has been brought down by the fury of two streams, the White Lütchine and the Black Lütchine, which rush down from the valleys of Grindelwald and Lauterbrunnen. In the Pyrenees, plenty of lakes are already filled.

People often say to themselves, 'How I should like to have seen this or that remarkable event or thing!—the great earthquake at Lisbon, the building of the Pyramids of Egypt, or the Peruvians before the discovery of America.' A time will come, with Dr. Cumming's permission, when people will say, 'How I should like to have seen the Swiss lakes! What a pity they were all filled up before my time! The earthy plain is more profitable and productive than the watery plain could have been; but still, the level blue expanse hemmed in, by mountains loftier than they now are, must have been wonderfully beautiful.'

Our day's journey comprises an agreeable change from steamer to diligence and thence to railroad. Morat in French, or Murten in German, rich in

historical recollections and ready money, detains us not to visit its battle-field, from which Charles the Bold ran away, and never stopped, till he came to Morges on the Lake of Geneva. The lapse of nearly four hundred years takes a great deal of the sharpness off the edge of a battle—for us, at least, though it does not for the Swiss. They still remember that 80,000 Confederates routed 70,000 Burgundian invaders, slaughtering 20,000 on the field, and driving 10,000 into the lake, out of which bits of Burgundian armour are even now occasionally fished up. This great Gallic disaster gave rise to Napoleon I.'s boast, when he visited the scene of action on his way to Rastadt: 'If ever we fight a battle hereabouts, we shall not retreat into the lake.' The old Helvetic spirit, which has not changed, fondly cherishes the memory of such victories as this, and will not allow them to drop. It thereby meets boast with boast, threat with threat, very much in the style of the Spartans, who, when summoned to deliver up their arms, replied to the summoner, 'Come and take them.'

The modern Swiss are sometimes taunted with being interested in their actions and fond of money. The taunt is flippant; for man, even after he has achieved political independence, cannot live on mountain air alone. The bowl of milk-porridge that feeds one month, will not fill the cravings of two. The owner of the second month must offer for sale what he has to sell: in the first instance, his services and his strength; secondly, his handiworks and board and lodging in his attractive home. Are the English indifferent to money? And the Irish? And the Scotch? Are not the French, athirst as they are for military glory, thirstier still after francs and centimes? What do French country-people talk about? Louis XIV. or Napoleon I.? Austerlitz, or even Solferino? Never; their talk is of pistoles and écus, of the price of kine and the prospects of beestock. Their greatest delight and pride is the possession of plenty of five-franc pieces.

The lion of Morat is an ancient lime-tree, under which the unsubmissive Swiss held their council of war before the battle. Near the Hôtel de Ville of Freyburg is another ancient lime-tree, likewise a lion, whose branches are supported by props of stone. The tradition is that a young Freyburgian who had been present at the battle of Morat, ran from thence to Freyburg, without stopping, to acquaint his townsmen with the joyous news, and that he fell

dead with exhaustion immediately he had uttered the word 'Victory!' He held in his hand a linden branch, which they planted, and it became the venerable tree which now exists.

Artists are sometimes at a loss for subjects for pictures. Let somebody attempt the arrival of the Freyburgian lad in the midst of his fellow-citizens. None but women, children, and aged folk would be there, all the men being at Morat, sorely fatigued with their terrible day's work.

At any rate, the Swiss are not yet a nation likely to submit tamely to 'annexation' by any powerful neighbour. They even chaff natives of a country which not long ago voted for its own absorption, by saying, 'You are nothing but Savoyards! You are only *cannozes*!'

Morat stands at a slight elevation above the lake, and is reached from the water's edge, on foot, by a flight of stone steps sufficiently numerous to give you a breathing. The streets are narrow, picturesque, and mostly arcaded. Here we change from steamer to diligence *coupé*, resisting the treacherous seductions of a return carriage to Freyburg, whose mendacious driver threatens us with missing the train to Berne. He says this with a chuckling laugh, as if he already enjoyed in prospect our vexation at having refused his offer, and pities our repentance when too late. He also asks for the use of his one-horse vehicle a heavier payment than the diligence fare turns out to be. Vagabond of a *voiturier*! Try your grins and your gibes on more docile ears. We put ourselves, together with the other baggage, in the hands of the Post Office, in confident expectation of being duly delivered.

Along the road our eyes are delighted with objects to which the panting young Freyburger would pay no attention in his rapid course. Would he notice that pretty purple *Salvia* peeping out in patches over the pasture-ground? Would he care for the familiar fruit-trees, just passing from blossom to fruit, (it was the 22nd of June), however luxuriant—for the apple, pear, and noble walnut-trees which stud this rich productive country? He might look with longing at the blue masses of mountain rising in the distance as we advance; but, poor lad, it is scarcely likely that he saw, as we do, thrifty plots of tobacco-plants, considering that America had not yet sent us any.

The peculiar situation of Freyburg is known to the world through innumerable pictorial illustrations. The

earth has gaped wide, forming an enormous rent, perhaps swallowing something, perhaps nothing; for the rock may have simply cracked open, like mud that lies drying in the sun. The depth of the original abyss, before Switzerland was colonized by its present inhabitants, may have been very great indeed; but it has long since been filled up to a certain level by stones and gravel brought down by the current of the Saane or Sarine. [Almost every item of topography hereabouts has two names, one German and another French.] Therefore, the bottom of this deep perpendicular chasm is the bed, not of a river, but of a broad torrent (one of the numerous contributors to the success of that popular magazine, the *Rhine*), which increases the difficulty of crossing over from one wall of rock to the wall opposite.

On the edge of one wall the city of Freyburg hangs, a natural fortress protected by such a ditch and rampart as were never yet made by human hands. At the bottom of the chasm, the Sarine is overarched by an old stone bridge which satisfied our ancestors; but 1834 opened a suspension bridge of wider span than our Menai Bridge, but so much lighter and less solid in construction, hung with such cobweb wires, that it is impossible to traverse it in a heavy-laden omnibus without thinking of the consequences of falling 170 feet plump down, and being thankful on touching terra firma. Engineers may be assured of its stability; but unlearned passengers dread its giving way one of these days. If ever I cross it again, it shall be on foot, and when not laden with carriages either. The bridge, however, is a great saving of time, even if it threaten to shorten your days. You can now cross in two minutes, and at a level, the profound hollow which took an hour to descend and mount again by passing over the ancient bridge.

1840 opened a shorter, stronger, and still more elevated suspension bridge over the valley of Gotteron, a lateral rent branching out of the main grand chasm. As you sit and restore yourself at the Zähringen Hotel, you can see and admire, between each savoury mouthful, all these objects grouped together in picturesque harmony, on the grandest scale, and with the brightest colouring. The railway from Berne affords excellent opportunities of enjoying the view and the flashpots of Freyburg. The fare is but trifling; and Sunday excursionists return the same evening with delighted eyes and satisfied stomachs.

We justly boast of the verdure of England; but I doubt whether it does not yield to the verdure of Switzerland. The magnitude of the picture also tells upon your imagination. Cabinet gems are not to be despised; but they fade and shrink away beside the grandeur of a Raphael cartoon or a Horace Vernet fresco. Moreover, in a mountainous country like this, bad weather is not always an unmixed evil; it sometimes surprises you with the most sublime and magnificent effects. While we are complaining of rain at Freyburg, we suddenly behold this masterpiece of landscape composition overarched by one complete unbroken rainbow resting on an ink cloud behind; while all the foreground, the bridges, the leafy heights, the quaint old buildings, and the foaming blue-rushing Sarine, are brought out by a sunset of Bengal fires.

With the situation of Freyburg compare that of Berne. It is a picked spot, selected out of a thousand localities where a town of importance might be built. It is neither spacious nor convenient, but it is safe, being an elevated promontory or narrow tongue of land, round the south, east, and north sides of which flows the river Aar, which afterwards swallows the waters of the Sarine, to be swallowed in turn by the great engulphur, the Rhine. Berne, therefore (before any bridge was built), was accessible only on one side, from behind. Its strength was consequently great to resist the assaults of the military appliances available four or five hundred years ago.

Such sites of towns are a summary of the spirit which has reigned in Switzerland for ages past—of independence, nationality, and resistance to oppression. It breaks out in every form of art and literature; on coins and medals, in public amusements, in popular songs. It has canonized the memory of William Tell. It gives us statues; of Rhodolph von Erlach, the victorious leader of the battle of Laupen, where less than 7,000 Bernese soldiers routed 30,000 enemies; of Arnold von Winkel, one of the forefathers who won the jewel of independence with their blood. It takes shape, and fires the mind, in modern pictures; witness that stirring gem in the Rath Museum of Geneva, where the oppressor's agent is come to seize the peasant's oxen, leaving the land untilled.

The Swiss peasant does not dream of fairy visits and wills-of-the-wisp; but he peoples the mountain gorge with Oastianic forms, with phantoms that stalk along clad in mail, armed with cross bow, buckler, and spear, exhorting

their posterity to maintain the old abhorrence of foreign bondage. Such an obstinate show of independence is the more striking from finding it displayed by a nation which, altogether, consists of only a handful of men whom the army of France believe they could swallow at a meal. We behold here a population less than that of London, namely, under two millions and a half, defying every and all oppressors in a way that almost makes us smile as if we saw Jack defying the Giant. Jack, however, is sublime rather than ridiculous. If needs must, he will go out to the struggle (beardless or greybearded with equal ardour), to try whether the rifle will not check the advance of intruding strangers. Antipathy to French rule is as strong in French Switzerland (where the spoken language and many of the special customs are French) as in cantons where French is Greek to the inhabitants.

While hunting after scenes and sites, it will be wise to take warning by the fatal accidents which occur amidst the Alps almost every summer. Switzerland occupies a certain small space on the map of Europe: but practically, Switzerland is duplicate. There are two Switzerlands, the upper and the lower, the accessible and the hard of access; Switzerland on earth and Switzerland in the clouds. The one may be agreeably journeyed through by ladies, elderly folk, and quiet people in general; the other is the haunt of chamois-hunters and members of the Alpine Club.

Still there is an attractive mid-region (allowing a near approach to and a closer view of forbidden spots and unattainable wonders), which may be visited without imprudence by persons who will relinquish perilous ascents and passages which, even if accomplished, lead to no useful result, either practical or scientific, but merely add to the tourist's capital of brag. Very good indications to these wilder and yet not too hazardous scenes are given in Bâdeker's excellent Manual. They are well worth seeing; for description fails to give any adequate conception of the effect of grand mountain scenery. While gazing at it, you experience a combination of sensual gratification to the eye and intellectual excitement to the mind, which can no more be described in words than certain tastes or certain bodily sensations.

The rocky wilderness is often rendered comfortable by the wooden hotels which are on the increase. Some of them are by no means small; they are not houses, but three-decker arks, built to remain on dry land instead of floating.

They are ships which are not prisons, and where there is no chance of being drowned. The rooms are cabins, separated from the other cabins by wooden partitions; the ceilings are diaphragms of wood. Though you do not hear the sea-waves splash, you may often listen to the waters rushing and the winds roaring in the rigging aloft, i. e., in the broad expanse of roof, weathercocks, and spouts. These arks, too, are ballasted, like other vessels, with the difference that the load of stones is placed aloft instead of in the hold, without fear of making the ship capsize. Amongst the Alps, there is nothing like wood; everything (except teakettles and frying-pans) is supposed capable of being made of wood. Wooden houses, with wooden walls and wooden roofs, shelter men who eat with wooden spoons and forks, and whose virtues are recorded on wooden gravestones. A Swiss dandy will even show his patriotism by wearing wooden buttons on his Sunday clothes.

When the carriage-road ceases in the Alps, there are two safe ways of travelling further: on foot, and in chairs carried by relays of men. The latter is expensive, and will hardly be employed for long distances. Saddle-horses and mules are to be had in plenty. They will often carry you well and safely, but will occasionally fail you at the most critical point, especially if you are not used to their ways and weaknesses. When the stream of tourists is at its fullest rush, a horse which has performed a fair journey in harness and has been so employed for weeks with no rest but rainy days, will be taken out of a carriage, fitted with a saddle, and forthwith placed at your service. What can you expect from such a hack as that?

Go, therefore, on foot, and with a guide, if you are alone, however unnecessary the guide-books may state him to be, and however easy to find the way may appear. Nothing is easier than to lose your direction; even if you regain it, it is a great loss of time. And if you are caught in a mist, alone, who knows whither you may wander? Supposing that you want no guide to conduct you over the mountain, still he will act as your domestic and companion; will carry your knapsack and bag; will help you to rare plants, and teach you topography. But wherever, or with whomsoever you go, let nothing induce you to set foot on snow.

There is one point over which we have no control—the weather. It may not always suit our travelling con-

venience that clouds should congregate and cluster about the Alps, laying their grisly heads together, to contrive which shall most vexatiously thwart the tourist; but it is some excuse for the delinquents that they have to supply a long length of European river with water. France and Germany would be in a sad condition if visitors to the Oberland might safely take no thought of umbrellas and overcoats.

In a plain country, we are apt to forget that we have an atmosphere. We breathe, as we ought to digest, unconsciously; the rain falls, we do not trouble ourselves whence; it waters our gardens or spoils our clothes, and that is all we think about it. Although the clouds may compel us to call for candles a quarter of an hour earlier than usual, they screen no familiar object from our view. They do not veil the Corinthian Club on the other side of the street, nor prevent us from watching the progress of neighbour Ackerman's hay-cocks.

In a mountainous country it is otherwise. The atmosphere forces itself upon your notice, whether you will or no. You can neither forget it nor ignore its influences. You are next-door neighbour to the clouds, and they treat you with a neighbour's familiarity. They come down upon you when you least expect, and sometimes make a longer stay than absolute politeness requires. They do not always agree amongst themselves, one standing stock-still, pinned to a peak or clinging for leagues to a broad hill side, while another will drift forward on its way. One cloud will rise while another will fall; one will slowly glide to the left, while another persists in proceeding to the right. All which would be no great affair of yours, if they simply minded their own business; but when

they shut every landmark out of sight, block up your road, betray you into danger, and wrap you in a chilly winding-sheet, the matter becomes serious, to say nothing of their utterly depriving you of the pleasing prospects at which you have been delighted to gaze. A mountain gorge then becomes a witches' caldron in which envious mists and baleful spells are brewed. The wind often achieves the feat of blowing hot and cold at once, placing the traveller in a painful dilemma whether to keep on his cloak or throw it off. Amidst mountains, the atmosphere will take you prisoner; and even when it does not do so actually, will show you boundaries which are not easy or obvious to pass. You feel in the condition of a fish in a pond, with air instead of water for your native element. Around you is a wall of steep and lofty rock, down which the clouds have dropped more than half-way, forming a misty, fleecy ceiling. You cannot climb through them to escape; you cannot bore a tunnel through the hills, nor dive to the bottom of the lakes to escape. It requires but little imagination to believe yourself caught and settled for life in an airy aquarium. You begin to get frightened at peaks and passes, and to sigh for the freedom of the open plain.

After all, the truest philosophy is to take a rainy day coolly and without loss of temper, not only making the best of a bad matter, but contriving that it should be anything but bad. A wet day allows you to rest your limbs and review your recollections, to write to friends and work up journals. It authorises you to convert passing faces into personal acquaintances, sometimes friends. I have even known a spell of rain result in—what do you think?—matrimony!



THE TALE OF A CHIVALROUS LIFE.

THE date of the death of Charlemagne is coeval with the date of the death of the empire he had constructed. The many and uncongenial nationalities which his hand had united, began to show themselves distinct, so soon as the grasp which had held them was loosened. Louis le Debonair, the immediate successor of Charlemagne, finding himself unequal to the burden his father had borne, commenced that system of dividing the empire amongst his children, which laid the foundations of the European kingdoms of the Middle Ages. The partition of the empire begat division of allegiance, and the sovereignty which was attributed to the head of the reigning family existed but in name, until it was finally abrogated, in 843, by the treaty of Verdun.

The example of Louis was followed by his descendants; so that within one hundred and forty years of the time when Leo III. placed the imperial crown on the head of Charlemagne, the unity of the Western Empire was totally destroyed. The thirds of the empire to which the three sons of Louis succeeded, had, within that period, become split up into numerous petty states, professing or denying their dependence on some larger state, according as circumstances dictated. But the warriors who ruled these smaller districts preferred to hold their dominions of God and their sword, to recognizing even the titular supremacy of any one of their neighbours. By constant warfare, and by occasional treaties, the successful princes gradually acquired such a dominion as enabled them to erect their principalities into kingdoms, and to establish themselves as independent sovereigns. From these beginnings came the kingdoms established by two successful soldiers, out of what was then called Burgundy, and comprised the provinces between the Rhone and the Alps, with Franche Comté, and part of Switzer-

land. These kingdoms were called respectively Provence and Trans-Jurane Burgundy. The latter, and smaller, was early absorbed in the former, and the two united were called the kingdom of Arles, which existed as an independent state from 933 till 1032, when Rudolph III. bequeathed it to the emperor Conrad II. The sovereignty was, however, merely nominal; and the lords of the country soon began to repeat on a smaller scale what had been done by the lords before them. They made their fiefs independent, and shook off the semblance of an authority which their superior was unable to enforce. One of these lords was the Lord of Vienne, whose family, in the course of a few generations, became absolute masters of an entire province, to which they gave the name of Dauphiné, a name suggested by their victorious crest, a dolphin. The lord, or dauphin, Humbert de Vienne, the last of his family, being without heirs, in 1349 bequeathed his lordship to Charles, grandson of Philip of Valois, on the understanding that it should be governed as a distinct county, and not be incorporated in the kingdom of France. Philip, by an 'ordonnance' issued in 1356, declared that Dauphiné should be an appanage of the French crown, in the hands of the heir apparent, who was to govern it according to its ancient laws, and was to take the title of dauphin as first in his addition.

In the year 1476 there was living, at six leagues from Grenoble, in Dauphiné, a family of as ancient lineage as the Lords of Vienne themselves—the family of Du Terrail, Seigneurs de Bayard. They had been lords of the soil during at least two dynasties, and had shed their blood freely in the quarrels of each. Their sacrifices for the House of Vienne were made too obscurely to obtain a lasting record; but history still relates how a Bayard fell fighting at Poitiers, when the father of the first dauphin was taken prisoner;



Drawn by J. E. Mills, R.A.

KNIGHTLY WORTH.

See "The Tale of a Chivalrous Life."



how that Bayard's son met death at Crécy; and how, again, his son was slain on the field of Montlbery. Each eminently loyal and eminently brave, their qualities seem to have become intensified by descending. Aymon du Terrail, son of the last named, having covered himself with wounds in the wars of Louis XI., survived to see the family bravery and loyalty reproduced and magnified in the person of his own son, the ever-memorable Chevalier Bayard—the Good Knight, *sans peur et sans reproche*.

The materials for the account of this illustrious man, as given in the following pages, have been collected from the undermentioned works: the history of him by the 'Loyal Serviteur,' who is supposed to have been Bayard's secretary, being that to which I am most largely indebted.

1. 'La très-joyeuse et très-plaisante histoire composée par le loyal serviteur, des faits, gestes, triomphes et prouesses du bon chevalier, sans peur et sans reproche, le gentil Seigneur de Bayart.' Also set forth in English by Mr. Kindersley, in 1848.
2. 'Histoire du Chevalier Bayard—et de plusieurs choses memorables advenues en France, Italie, Espagne, et en Pays Bas, du règne des Roys Charles VIII., Louys XII., et François I., depuis l'an 1489 jusques à 1524.' Paris, 1616.
3. 'Les gestes ensemble la vie du preulx Chevalier Bayard; Archives curieuses de l'histoire de France depuis Louis XI. jusqu'à Louis XVIII.' Paris, 1234-40.

Aymon du Terrail, being near his end, was anxious to see his four sons set forth in the world, before death should overtake him. He therefore took an occasion to call them before him, and inquired of each the calling he most desired. The choice of the eldest was to remain with his father to the end of his days, and then to succeed him in rendering faithful service to their lord, the dauphin. The third and fourth elected to devote themselves to God and His church, and were respectively taken in charge by their uncles, the Abbot of Esnay, near Lyons, and the good Bishop of Grenoble. Pierre, the

second son, answered his father's question in these words: 'My lord and father, much as filial love constrains me to forget everything, in order to wait on you to the end of your life; yet, having enrooted in my heart the fine traits which you daily recite of the noble men of days past, particularly of those of our own house, I will be, if it pleases you, of the same profession as yourself and your predecessors—that of arms; for it is the thing of all others I most desire; and I hope, with the aid of God's grace, not to dishonour you.'

The good old man answered, with tears: 'My child, may God's grace be with thee! Already thou dost resemble in face and figure thy grandfather, who was in his time one of the most accomplished knights in Christendom. I will do my best to further thy wishes.' Next day, Aymon du Terrail sent to his brother-in-law, the good Bishop of Grenoble, whose kindness and generosity were only equalled by his manly piety, to beg a visit to the château. The bishop set out at once, and found his brother-in-law seated in an arm-chair by the fire, 'as old men are wont.' The decision of Pierre to become a soldier was then communicated to his uncle, whose advice was asked as to whether the youth should besent, in order to learn his profession.

Some gentlemen who were present recommended his being sent to the King of France; others to the family of Bourbon; but the bishop's voice prevailed, in favour of his being offered as a page to Duke Charles of Savoy. Measures were immediately taken. The bishop sent that very day for his tailor to bring velvet, satin, and other requisites for the boy's equipment. The tailor came, and worked all night, so that next morning all was ready.

Pierre, dressed out in his fine clothes, and mounted on a spirited charger—also provided by his generous uncle—set forth with him for Chambéry, where Duke Charles lay. Before leaving he sought and obtained his father's blessing. His good mother, to whom he owed so much, took farewell of him in these

words: 'Pierre, my friend, you are going to serve a gentle prince. I charge you to observe three things, which if you do, be assured you will prosper. The first is, that before all things you love, fear, and serve God, never offending Him if possible; for it is He who created us, in whom we live, and who will save us; and without Him and His grace we can do no good thing in this world. Every morning and every evening commit yourself to Him, and He will aid you. The second is, that you be gentle and courteous to all, putting away all pride. Eschew evil speaking and falsehood. Be sober and temperate. Flee envy, for it is an odious vice. Be neither a flatterer nor an informer; for such people seldom come to good. Be true and loyal in word and deed. Keep your promise. Succour poor widows and orphans, and God will recompense it you. The third thing is, that of the goods which God shall give you, you be charitable to the poor and needy; for to give for His sake, makes no man poor; and take this from me, my child, that the alms you give will profit you in body and soul. This is all I have to charge you; I am persuaded that your father and I shall not long survive; God grant that while we live we may always have a good report of you.'

From such a father and mother as Pierre had, it is small wonder that there should spring so true a man and so valiant a soldier as was the 'Good Knight, without fear and without reproach.'

Duke Charles gladly accepted the present of the Bishop of Grenoble, and before the boy had been six months in his service, loved him as his own son. For there was neither page nor lord who could in all things compare with him. He leaped, wrestled, threw the bar, and put his horse through all his paces, so as none could excel him.

One day, Bayard being in his fourteenth year, Duke Charles set out to visit the chivalrous Charles VIII., who was holding jousts, and tournaments, and other festivities, at Lyons. Bayard of course accompanied him, and attracted universal

admiration by his noble bearing, and by the excellent manner in which he managed his horse. At the suggestion of the Lord de Ligny, who spoke in the king's presence of the address of Duke Charles' page, the duke offered to make the king a present of Bayard, at the same time commending him warmly to the royal notice. The king thanked the duke, and desired to see the youth perform some of his exercises. Accordingly, Bayard appeared, splendidly mounted, in the meadow of Esnay, whither the king had appointed to come; and so charmed him by the ease and skill with which he put his horse through the most difficult evolutions, that Charles cried out, 'Truly, cousin, it is impossible to manage a horse better; I shall not wait till you give me your page and his horse, but beg them of you.'

So Bayard passed into the service of the King of France, who committed him to the care of the Lord de Ligny, a seigneur of Luxembourg, and one very highly esteemed by his master.

On his reaching the age of seventeen, the Lord de Ligny discharged him from pagehood, and appointed him of his company.

Shortly after this event, Charles VIII. being again at Lyons, Master Claude de Vandray, a Burgundian gentleman, well skilled in the science of war, proclaimed a passage of arms, and suspended his shields for all who chose, to touch.

Bayard, walking one day with his companion and late fellow-page, Bellabre, came up to the shields, and observing them, said how gladly he would touch them if only he knew how to procure armour and horses, for, said he, 'a great desire has seized me to touch Master Claude's shields, in order that I may have a lesson in the use of arms.'

Said Bellabre: 'My friend, are these your thoughts? Have you not your uncle, the fat abbot of Esnay? I vow we will go to him, and if he will not supply the money, we'll take his cross and his mitre; but I think when he knows your wish he will give it willingly.'

Upon this Bayard touched the

shields, and the report of his having done so spread rapidly through Lyons. The Lord de Ligny was delighted, and told the news to the king, who also expressed his satisfaction. 'We shall see what will come of it,' said De Ligny; 'he is young yet to stand the blows of Master Claude.'

Bayard, accompanied by Bellabre, set off to the Abbot of Esnay, and though at first rebuked for presumption in touching the shields, and told that the alms of the abbey were for the service of God, not for jousts and tournaments, came away with one hundred crowns to buy him two horses, and an order to the abbot's agent to supply clothes and accoutrements. The order being general, and not restricting the agent to any precise amount, Bayard got eight hundred francs out of the man, to the great horror of his uncle, who, it seemed, did not contemplate spending more than eighty, or at most, a hundred francs. 'However,' says the chronicle, 'the abbot had nothing for it but to digest his wrath as best he could.'

The tournament was maintained with bravery and spirit, and all the knights did well; but there was no man during the whole contest who surpassed the youthful Bayard, either on horseback or on foot. And he won the praises of the ladies of Lyons; for as he passed along the lists, after having done his devoir, with his vizor up, and blushing, the ladies honoured him by saying, 'Look at this bashful stripling, he has done better than all the others.' At supper, the king complimented the Lord de Ligny upon the courage and address of his pupil; and hearing the story of the abbot and his crowns, laughed heartily, as did all the company.

Soon after the day of the tournament, the Lord de Ligny sent Bayard to join the garrison in Picardy, whither he went, loaded with presents from the king himself, from his kind master, and from many of the nobles of the court.

On arriving at Ayre, the young gentleman was warmly greeted by his comrades in arms, and, at their earnest solicitation, agreed to hold

a tourney under the walls of the town. The terms of the tourney were drawn out by himself. A bracelet of gold, of thirty crowns' weight, and a diamond worth forty crowns, were promised to those who should acquit themselves best with the lance and sword. Forty-six of the most famous men at arms in Picardy appeared in the lists. Among them were Bellabre, who had followed closely on Bayard, Tartarin, 'a very stout man at arms,' David de Fougat, a Scotch captain, Tardieu, a valiant gentleman of the garrison, the Bastard de Chimay, and many others.

After numerous lances had been broken in the best possible style, and many swords had been snapped on the armour of the knights, it was agreed by all the spectators, as well as by the two judges, that there was never seen a day of better tilting with the lance, or fighting with the sword. And though each did right well, the best were the Good Knight and Bellabre. The tourney was followed by a magnificent supper given by Bayard to the ladies, who afterwards amused themselves with dances and other entertainments, 'so that it struck one hour after midnight before any one flagged.'

Next day 'it was late enough before the fair dames were well awake,' but being aroused they went to mass, after which, 'you might have seen the young gentlemen give their arms to the ladies, and conduct them, discoursing of love and other joyous matters, to the quarters of the Good Knight,' where they dined. After dinner came the second day's performance in the lists, and again the general voice proclaimed Bayard to have done best of all the knights. In consequence of this, on him devolved the honour of bestowing his own prizes; and with the hearty approval of all the company, he adjudged the prize of the first day to the Lord de Bellabre, and that of the second day to the Lord David of Scotland.

Bayard remained two years in Picardy, universally beloved and honoured, and then accompanied

the Lord de Ligny through the successful campaign of Naples, greatly distinguishing himself at the battle of Fornova, where he had two horses killed under him.

Charles VIII. dying in 1498, was succeeded by his uncle, Louis of Orleans, who revived the French claim to the Duchy of Milan, then held tortiously by Ludovico Sforza. When Filippo Maria, the last of the Visconti, died in 1447, the Duchy of Milan was claimed by the then Duke of Orleans, in right of Valentine, his mother, daughter of Gian Galeazzo Visconti, who became Duchess of Orleans in 1389. But Sforza was at that time powerful enough to secure himself in the duchy which he had usurped; and since his death, the policy of the French king had been to allow the assertion of his right by force of arms, to await such an opportunity as now seemed to his successor to present itself. Louis XII. accordingly availed himself of the dislike manifested in the duchy for Ludovico, who was usurping, while pretending to care for, the interests of his nephew, and contrived, partly by force, partly through the treachery of Ludovico's generals, to get possession of Milan, and ultimately of the entire duchy. Ludovico fled for assistance to Maximilian, King of the Romans.

Bayard accompanied the French force to Milan, and when Louis returned to France, the knight took an opportunity of visiting his old master, Duke Charles of Savoy. Here he found his first and only love, married to the Lord de Fluxas, the superintendent of the duke's household. Fate and inevitable circumstances had separated them, and prevented the union they both had hoped for. But now the lady, who was famous for her beauty and powers of conversation, received her old lover graciously and courteously, and he, in all loyalty and with strong but tempered affection, met her kindness as became a man and a gentleman. At her instance, the Good Knight gave a tourney at Carignan, and begging one of the lady's sleeves, offered it and a ruby worth one hundred ducats, to the

knight who should do his devoir best. Never was there better tilting nor more splendid swordmanship, and all the champions bore themselves so well that the company was much gratified.

By general consent Bayard was declared victor, but he declined to receive the prize, urging that all the merit belonged to the Lady de Fluxas, who had given her sleeve for a reward. The Lord de Fluxas, knowing the honour and loyalty of his wife and of the Good Knight, was nothing jealous at this speech, but himself bore the sleeve to the lady, and told her what the Lord de Bayard had said. Whereupon she declared the prize to be due to the Lord de Mondragon, who had borne himself so as to be second only to Bayard. After this the French gentlemen returned to their garrisons, where they soon had work enough to do; for Ludovico Sforza having collected troops in Germany, came back and succeeded in retaking the city of Milan. One day the Good Knight, who was in garrison about twenty miles from Milan, heard that John Bernardin Cazache, a brave and experienced soldier, was in the neighbourhood with three hundred horsemen. Taking forty or fifty of his companions with him, Bayard soon found the enemy, and commenced a furious fight, which lasted an hour, when the Lombards retreated, fighting. When they saw themselves near to Milan, they rode hard for it, closely pursued by the French. The Good Knight followed them so eagerly, that he entered the city with them, and was taken prisoner, surrendering himself to the Lord de Cazache. Ludovico sent for the prisoner, and was so charmed by his noble demeanour and bold speech, that he at once liberated him without ransom, and sent him back with a herald, to the French army. With the subsequent fate of Ludovico after his duchy had been again acquired for the French crown, we have here no concern. The next event of importance to be noticed respecting Bayard, occurred during the campaign which Louis XII. undertook for the purpose of asserting

his claim to the throne of Naples. The knight being stationed at Monervyne, went out with thirty young and resolute companions, in hopes of meeting a detachment of the enemy; and as luck would have it, soon encountered a body of forty or fifty Spanish gentlemen, under the Captain Don Alonzo de Sotomajor, who had started from Andrea on a similar errand. A sharp skirmish ensued, which lasted half an hour, when the Spaniards who remained alive, turned and fled, among them Don Alonzo. Bayard pursued, and called aloud to the captain to turn, saying, 'it were a great shame to be slain fleeing.' On this, Don Alonzo stood at bay, and the two knights 'exchanged fifty blows without breathing.' But all would not do, and the Spaniard found himself obliged to yield his sword on pain of instant death. Bayard, 'who was the adopted son of the Lady Courtesy,' lodged his prisoner very handsomely; and having taken his parole not to escape, suffered him to have the run of the castle. But Don Alonzo proved himself unworthy of the confidence reposed in him. After two or three weeks he grew weary of confinement, and succeeded in getting away from Monervyne; but being soon pursued, he was recaptured and brought back to be loaded with the indignant reproaches of his generous enemy, and to be confined in a tower, without, however, finding any diminution in the bounty of his entertainment. After fifteen days there came a trumpet with Don Alonzo's ransom, so he was released and sent to Andrea. To his companions, who sought from him information concerning the famous Bayard, he bore ample testimony to the knightly and generous qualities of his captor; 'but,' said he, 'as for his treatment of me, I cannot altogether praise it; for whether it were by his orders, I know not, but his people treated me more roughly than was due to a gentleman, and I am far from satisfied with it.' When this speech was reported to the Lord de Bayard, he was highly incensed, and at once sending for a clerk, dictated a letter,

desiring Don Alonzo to unsay the false words he had spoken, or else to meet him in mortal combat when and where he liked. The answer was an acceptance of the challenge. Accordingly, on the day appointed, Bayard, though suffering from an attack of fever, presented himself with a noble company, at the place of combat, whither Don Alonzo, likewise attended by many *grandeas*, also repaired. On the election of Don Alonzo, the duel was to be fought on foot, with rapier and dagger. Never were seen two more doughty champions; each was sure of foot and eye, and would not strike at random. The Good Knight soon perceived the trick of his enemy, who, as soon as he had delivered his blow, guarded his face so that he could not be hurt. Watching an opportunity when Don Alonzo raised his arm to strike, he did the same, but held his rapier steadily raised till his enemy's blow had passed, and then taking him exposed, launched him such a tremendous blow on the throat, that despite his good gorget, the rapier entered his throat four good finger breadths.

The end soon followed; and Don Alonzo paid the penalty of his falsehood with his life. Great was the sorrow of the Spaniards, and great the rejoicing of the French; but Bayard returned God thanks for the victory accorded to him, and 'was accounted, both by the French and Spaniards, to be one of the most accomplished knights that could be found.'

Soon after this there was a truce for two months; but the Spaniards, weary of inaction, sought and obtained a combat between thirteen cavaliers of either nation, in which it was arranged that those who should be dismounted were to be precluded from taking further part in the day's work. At the very first charge eleven of the French gentlemen's horses were slain; yet, notwithstanding that the odds were then thirteen to two, the Lord de Bayard and the Lord d'Oroze succeeded in maintaining themselves till nightfall, when they retired with much honour, to the great disap-

pointment of the Spaniards, who had thought to have made all the French knights prisoners.

A few days after the expiration of the truce the Good Knight succeeded in capturing a Spanish treasurer, who was carrying fifteen thousand ducats for the Great Captain Gonsalvo. Tardieu, who had also been on the look-out for this treasure, but had not been present at its capture, was much mortified to find he was to have no share in the prize. Claiming it rudely from Bayard, he was told he should have none of it; 'for,' said the Good Knight, 'though you have been one in the undertaking, you have not been one in the taking.' An appeal to the general was decided against Tardieu, who seemed likely to get little by his motion, after the captor and the captor's commander had both rejected his suit. But now that all demand as of right was silenced, Bayard proceeded to one of those acts which noble natures love to perform.

He caused the gold to be spread out on a table, and calling Tardieu, said to him, 'What you could not get from me by force I give you freely with all my heart; you shall have the full half.' And he immediately had the money counted out and given to him.

For the other half, he would not touch a denier of it, but divided it amongst the garrison; and that all might taste of his bounty, he dismissed his Spanish prisoner without ransom.

Towards the close of the war the two armies lay on either side of the Garigliano, a bridge over which was carefully guarded by the French. Don Pedro de Pas, a valiant commander, being desirous of getting possession of this bridge for the Spaniards, one day made a feint with one hundred and twenty horsemen, to pass the river by a ford with which he was acquainted, in hopes of drawing the French away from the bridge.

The ruse succeeded admirably; and the French, thinking the whole Spanish army intended to ford the river, hastened away to oppose them.

The Good Knight, who was quar-

tered near the bridge with the Squire Le Basco, lost no time in getting to arms, and happening to look across the river saw two hundred Spanish cavaliers making straight for the bridge, which, being once in their possession, the total destruction of the French army must have ensued. Sending Le Basco to collect some men, Bayard single-handed, rushed at the advancing troop, and, besides killing many of them, succeeded in holding his post for half an hour, until the arrival of Le Basco with a hundred men-at-arms enabled him to drive the Spaniards back.

On the further side of the river the enemy were reinforced, and a fresh attack was made on the small band of Frenchmen. Bayard's horse, worn out with its tremendous exertions, could bear up no longer, and the Good Knight found himself compelled to yield to the overpowering numbers of the enemy. From carelessness or oversight the captors omitted to deprive their prisoner, of whose name they were ignorant, of his sword, perhaps considering him secure in the midst of so many of them. His comrades were not long in discovering their loss; and as soon as they did so they all vowed to rescue their brave captain, or to perish in the attempt. The retreating Spaniards were speedily surprised by a furious charge upon their rear, which, however, they sustained without flinching; but what was their astonishment on beholding their prisoner bound on to the riderless horse of Don Salvador de Borgia, and begin laying about him with his good sword in such a manner as to make them doubt whether he were man or fiend. Finding out now, by terrible experience, who the illustrious prisoner was that they had suffered to escape, they fled, frightened, back to their camp; and the Good Knight and his worthy companions returned in high glee to their own quarters.

Twelve months after this all the French troops were recalled from Italy, and there was a cessation of hostilities between France and Spain.

The next important services which engaged the French arms were those consequent upon the League of

Cambray, concluded in 1508 between the Emperor Maximilian, Ferdinand of Spain, Louis XII. of France, and Pope Julius II., and having for its object the overthrow of the State of Venice, and the partition of its territory among the allies. Bayard commanded a troop of five hundred men in the contingent furnished by the King of France; and by a skilful attack on the Venetian flank contributed greatly to the enormous defeat experienced by the Venetians at Agnadello in 1509. He was also one in the noble company despatched by Louis, at the emperor's request, to assist in recapturing the important town of Padua, which had fallen into Maximilian's hands after the battle of Agnadello, and had since been retaken by the Venetians, through the supineness or treachery of its defenders. It is foreign to our purpose to describe here the details of the famous siege of Padua; the vast strength of the besiegers; their wonderful array of artillery; their six great mortars of cast metal, which fired stone bullets, and could be discharged no more than four times a day, on account of their unwieldiness; or to tell of the great skill and ingenuity displayed by the Count de Petilana in defending the town. Suffice it for us to say, that among many of the noblest and bravest in Germany and France the Good Knight Bayard was conspicuous by his courage and address. The manner in which he headed the French storming party, voluntarily dismounting, in order that he might induce the infantry to burst the Venetian barriers; the feats of arms which he performed in the face of the most imminent dangers; and the hardihood with which he bore himself in many single combats, were the talk of the whole army. The siege being eventually raised by the emperor, on account of its many difficulties, and also on account of the disunion among the German nobles, the French troops broke up from before Padua, and retired into garrison at Verona, to the number of four hundred men-at-arms.

While in this place an incident occurred which brought out the

courage and the wariness of the Good Knight very conspicuously. The Venetian captain John Monfrone bribed Vizentino, a spy who received the pay of each side and deceived both, to tell Bayard that Monfrone would make an excursion next morning towards Lignago, accompanied by only three hundred light horse. In truth he meant to draw the Good Knight out, and then to attack him with two hundred men-at-arms and two thousand infantry, the latter to be placed in ambush at Isola della Scala. At first the intelligence was credited by Bayard, and he therefore made arrangements for cutting off the enemy with two hundred men-at-arms. But before morning suspicions of treachery were aroused; and Vizentino being seized, and threatened with instant death, confessed the whole truth.

Next morning Bayard set out with his men-at-arms as if nothing had happened to awaken his apprehensions; but in the village of Servoda, about two miles from Isola della Scala, he had previously stationed two thousand lansquenets, of which the Venetians knew nothing. In a short time Monfrone appeared in the plain with some light horse, and Bayard sent forward the Bastard du Fay to skirmish with him. Presently a large body of infantry and a troop of men-at-arms were seen issuing from Isola. The Good Knight, pretending surprise, sounded a retreat, and the Bastard du Fay drew off his men in close order, retiring upon Verona. The Venetians, sure of catching their prey, made repeated charges on the French, who skirmished cautiously till within a bow-shot of Servoda, when the lansquenets issued forth at a brisk pace, and with the men-at-arms made a furious rush upon the enemy. Many of the Venetians, though they bore themselves well, were overthrown; and for their infantry, it was totally destroyed. The French returned to Verona with many prisoners and much booty, and were warmly welcomed by their comrades, who were much vexed not to have been with them.

The next time we find anything

worthy to be recorded of the Good Knight is when we find him sent with two other lords and a strong contingent to assist the Duke of Ferrara in defending himself against Pope Julius II., who claimed the duchy as Church property, and had sent an army, under the Duke d'Urbino, to assert his title by force of arms. During this warfare Bayard conceived a plan for capturing the holy father and all his cardinals by means of an ambushade between St. Felix and Mirandola; and he would undoubtedly have succeeded in doing so had it not been for the unfortunate interference of a snow-storm, which obliged the pope to turn back after he had set out for Mirandola. Although fate denied him whatever advantage there might have been in taking the papal court prisoners, it had in reserve for him a more solid and glorious honour, which was the relief of La Bastide, an important town twenty-five miles from Ferrara, and the key of the whole duchy.

It was the Good Knight who planned the relief of this beleaguered place, and it was he who, in the company of the Duke of Ferrara, the Lord Mointois, and the Lord de Foutrailles, executed the design he had conceived, and that with so signal success as not only to succour the town of La Bastide, but also to destroy the army besieging it. This army was composed of the flower of the papal troops, and its overthrow caused the pope so much distress and so much anger, that he swore 'by the body of Christ' to be revenged. But finding his opponents too strong for him in the field he resorted to expedients disgraceful to any man, but doubly so to one who called himself the vice-regent of Christ. He employed men to poison the Duke of Ferrara, the Good Knight Bayard, and the principal French gentlemen in Ferrara; but his designs were discovered and his agents were hanged. He then pretended friendship for the duke, and proposed to him to send away the French troops who were with him, intending, when they should be set out, to fall upon them and cut them to pieces.

The duke, on hearing the pope's proposal, arrested his messenger, and communicated his news to the Good Knight, who was at first unwilling to credit the existence of so much baseness in the Head of the Church; but subsequently, when the duke came again to him, and said that now they might be equal with his holiness, for that the pope's own agent had been won over to undertake the poisoning of his master, the gentle Lord de Bayard expressed his utmost horror at the proposal, and vowed that should the design be persisted in, he would himself warn the pope of the plot; 'For,' said he, 'I believe that God would never pardon so horrible a crime.' And thus was saved the life of Julius II. by the very man whose existence he had so greatly laboured to cut short.

Two years afterwards the pope was compelled to be quiet, for lack of forces, his whole army being utterly defeated at Bologna by the French, under the Lord Jean Jacques.

Meantime the gentle Duke of Nemours, Gaston de Foix, nephew of the French king, had become Governor of Lombardy. Meantime, too, the Venetians, under Master Andrew Gritti, had captured the city of Brescia from the French, who were driven into the citadel, and had become reduced to great straits. They sent a message to the duke, who was at Bologna with his army, and who, as soon as he heard of the condition of the garrison at Brescia, marched in all haste to their relief. The town was defended by about eight thousand regular troops and twelve or fourteen thousand peasants, while the French force did not consist of more than twelve thousand fighting men. But these twelve thousand were the very flower of chivalry, and ready to die for their master, the King, and the gentle Duke of Nemours. The town was fiercely assaulted, and bravely defended, but nothing could withstand the desperate valour of the French; and after a hard struggle the place was carried with a loss to the enemy of no less than twenty thousand men. The Good

Knight, who had obtained, at his own urgent request, the most dangerous place in the storming party, was the first Frenchman who passed the rampart; and it was mainly owing to his company, which was composed all of picked men, that the assault was so successful. While leading on his troops, in a place where 'the balls and bullets came thick as flies,' he received a deep pike-thrust in the thigh, and being thought to be mortally wounded, was carried out of the fight to die. But God intended him for higher things still, and his end was not to be yet. When the storming was over, the two archers who had borne him out of the press unhinged a door, and took him as gently as they could to the most respectable-looking house they saw. This was the house of a gentleman who had fled for refuge to a monastery, leaving behind him his wife and two lovely daughters, who were concealed under some hay in a loft. The good lady having admitted the Knight, fell on her knees, and besought him to save the honour of herself and her two girls. The Good Knight, who never entertained a wicked thought, replied, 'Madam, I know not whether I shall recover from my wound; but whilst I live no insult shall be offered to you or your daughters: only keep them out of sight. And I assure you that you have here a gentleman who will not plunder you, but show you any courtesy in his power.' By the skill of the surgeon, and through the tender nursing of the ladies, the Good Knight recovered so rapidly that in less than a month he was ready to mount on horseback. Reports had come to him, during his illness, of the expected approach of a great battle between the French and the Spaniards; and he chafed so greatly at the bare idea of being absent from it, that his surgeon was induced to pronounce him fit for travelling before the wound was entirely healed. Accordingly, he gave orders to prepare for his departure from Brescia at the earliest possible day, and was overjoyed at the prospect of rejoining the army, which was at this

time in face of the enemy at Ravenna. On the eve of his departure his hostess came to him, and poured forth her grateful thanks for the protection which he had afforded to her and her family, at the same time begging his acceptance of two thousand five hundred ducats as a present. But he checked the flow of her gratitude, declaring that it rather behoved him to give her his acknowledgments for her great care and attention to him during his illness, and concluded by declining altogether to receive her money. When she continued to press it on him, saying that not only it but all they had was his by right of conquest, he smiled, and said that since she so much desired it, he would accept her bounty. But having done so, he called for her two daughters, and taking leave of them most courteously, made them divide the ducats for a marriage portion. And so, with the blessings of these gentle ladies, and with a thankful heart to God for his recovery, the Good Knight set forth, and arrived, on the Wednesday evening in Holy Week, in the camp of the Duke of Nemours, before Ravenna.

The day after his arrival a council of war was held to decide what should be done. Provisions were scarce in the French camp, and supplies were cut off by the Venetians on one side, and by the Spaniards on the other; the Viceroy of Naples, Don Raymond de Cardonna, was in the rear with a large relieving army, and in front was the city of Ravenna, held by the Lord Mark Anthony Colonna with a sufficient garrison. A battle seemed inevitable; but the risks were so great that it was deemed prudent to consult the general opinion before venturing the stake. The opinions of the officers were very conflicting; but Bayard, who had been privately informed by Captain Jacob, of the arrival of a letter from the emperor, commanding the lansquenets on no account to fight the Spaniards, gave his voice in favour of the battle, knowing how serious a thing it would be if the news of the emperor's letter got known before an engagement could be fought. The

Duke of Nemours and most of the chief commanders inclined to the Good Knight's opinion: so it was resolved to give battle to the enemy on Easter Day. On that day, accordingly, was fought 'the cruel and furious battle of Ravenna,' which lasted from eight in the morning till four in the afternoon, and in which the Spaniards suffered so enormously that, as the 'loyal serviteur' says, 'a hundred years will not repair their loss.' They lost all their artillery, hacquebutes, and baggage, and of twenty thousand cavalry and infantry not more than four thousand escaped being killed or made prisoners. The French lost many valiant captains, three thousand infantry and eighty men-at-arms; but the saddest loss of all, which dimmed the glory of their victory so that they were ready to curse it, was the loss of the gallant Duke de Nemours. He fell with fourteen wounds between the forehead and the chin, after performing feats of arms not surpassed by Roland at Roncesvalles, or by Leonidas at Thermopylae. The Good Knight, though everywhere in the thickest of the fight, escaped without a wound, and lived to add his tears to those of the whole French army, when they fell over the body of the bravest knight that ever was in Christendom.

Soon after the battle of Ravenna the pope succeeded in detaching the emperor from his alliance with the French; who, having thus the whole power of Italy and the empire arrayed against them, were gradually driven out of Lombardy. In the retreat from Pavia the Good Knight was badly wounded in the neck by a ball from a hacquebute. He managed to cross the mountains with the army, and to get to Grenoble, where fever set in, so that his life was despaired of. His kind uncle, the good bishop, was unremitting in his attentions, and prayers were offered up continually in all the churches round for the recovery of the sick man, who bewailed his fate in surviving so many and great dangers if now he was to die 'like a maiden in his bed.' As the 'loyal serviteur' says: 'It could not be but that amongst so many people there

must have been some good person whose prayer the Lord would hear,' and, accordingly, in about three weeks the Good Knight was completely recovered, and able to take part in the pleasures of his friends. He was not suffered, however, to remain long without employment, for within a short time he was sent with some heavy artillery to join the Lord de la Palisse, and assist him in wresting the kingdom of Navarre from the King of Arragon, who had usurped it. During this short and fruitless campaign he rendered several very eminent services; among others, capturing a castle near Pampeluna, which was stoutly defended, and which had caused great annoyance to the army besieging the town. Pampeluna, though hard pressed, held out till the arrival of relief, when the French were forced to retreat, and to return home, without having made any permanent impression upon their enemy.

In 1513 Henry VIII. of England, who had allied himself with the Emperor, landed at Calais with a powerful army, and laid siege to Terouenne. The town was sufficiently garrisoned, but very ill victualled, and it became of the last importance to throw supplies into it. Accordingly the Lord de la Palisse, with whom was the Good Knight, was sent forward with a strong force to effect this desirable object; but he had special orders to avoid a general engagement. Information of his design was communicated to the King of England, who took measures to prevent it; so that when the French got to horse and approached the town, they found themselves overlooked by ten thousand archers posted on a high hill, and watched by a body of Burgundian men-at-arms stationed in the plain.

A sharp skirmish ensued; but when the French saw the infantry descending the hill to enclose them, a panic seized them, and they fled at a gallop back to their camp: nor could all the efforts of the Good Knight and the other commanders avail to rally them. The nimbleness with which these men fled caused the battle to be called *The Battle of*

Spurs, in which the spur was more used than the sword.

Bayard, ever in the post of danger, was attempting with nine men-at-arms to cover the retreat of his soldiers by repeatedly charging upon the enemy. In one of these charges he found himself surrounded, and seeing that escape was hopeless, and further resistance impossible, he thought only of how to surrender to the best advantage. Seeing a knight, wounded and unhelmeted, reposing under a tree, he spurred to him, put his sword to his throat, and bade him yield. The gentleman was astounded, but was forced to surrender; which having done, Bayard returned him his sword, and then gave himself up as his prisoner's prisoner. This piece of address was loudly commended by the Emperor and by the King of England, who, with many compliments to the Good Knight for his bravery and skill, declared that the two gentlemen were quits, and accordingly dismissed Bayard, without ransom, to the French camp.

Terouenne surrendered a few days after the battle of Spurs. Tournay soon followed. But the winter coming on, all further operations were suspended, and the allied armies broke up to return to their respective countries.

In the month of January following, the French king lost his 'good companion and spouse,' Anne of Brittany. He survived her but one year, and was succeeded in January, 1515, by Francis I., the handsomest prince of his day, and but lately married to the Lady Claude of France, eldest daughter of the late king and the Duchess of Brittany.

Soon after his coronation Francis made preparations for reconquering the Duchy of Milan, and moved his army towards the Lyonnese and Dauphiny. The Good Knight was, as usual, sent on in front. In the town of Villafranca he surprised the Lord Prosper Colonna and several other great captains, whom he made prisoners; besides capturing an immense booty in horses, money, and gold and silver vessels, valued at fifty thousand crowns. The Swiss, hearing of this capture, abandoned

the mountain passes they had seized, and retired to Milan, whither they were followed by the French, who pitched their camp at Marignano, about fifteen miles from the city. Negotiations were here opened for an arrangement of all differences; but one Thursday evening, pending these negotiations, the Swiss, aroused by the preaching of the Cardinal of Syon, sallied forth from Milan, and made a sudden irruption into the French camp. The Duke of Bourbon, who commanded the vanguard, at once formed his men, and sent a messenger to the king for assistance. The skirmishing became very sharp between the advanced posts, and both sides were warming well to their work when Francis came up. He tried to push his lansquenets across a ditch which intervened between him and the enemy; but the Swiss fought so bravely, and attacked the lansquenets so stoutly, that but for the repeated charges made by the Lord de Guise, the Duke de Bourbon, the Count de St. Pol, and the Lord de Bayard, it had certainly gone hard with the French. The Swiss were at length broken by the cavalry of the vanguard, and began to give ground, though they disputed desperately every inch of it. Francis was at one time in great danger, for his *grandebuffe* was pierced through and through by a pike. The Good Knight, too, had a narrow escape. His bridle got cut in the course of the fight, and the horse, finding itself free of the rein, dashed right into the midst of the Swiss ranks, and so through them. He was about to rush at a second body of them, when happily his head got caught in some vines, and Bayard was able to dismount and leave him, getting back to the camp on foot, under the friendly cover of night. Next day the fight was recommenced by an attack on the French artillery, and lasted from three to four hours; at the end of which time the Swiss retreated in good order to Milan, leaving ten or twelve thousand dead upon the field. The loss of the French was very great, for there fell the Lord Francis de Bourbon, the gentle Captain d'Hymberecourt,

the Count de Sauxerre, and the Lord de Mony; the Prince de Talmont and the Lord de Bucy afterwards died of their wounds.

The Swiss were allowed to retire to their own country, and Milan soon afterwards surrendered. In the evening after the battle, there was great joy in the French camp, and the king determined to confer the honour of knighthood upon some of those who had served him so well. Before doing so, however, it behoved him to receive knighthood himself, so he selected the good Lord de Bayard as the most worthy and valorous gentleman from whom he could accept this dignity. Accordingly the Good Knight laid his sword on the king's shoulder, and said; 'Sire, may you be as renowned as Roland or Oliver, Godfrey or Baldwin his brother; and God grant you may never turn your back in war!' Thus did the Lord de Bayard accept and confer an honour.

In 1519 the Emperor Maximilian died, and was succeeded by his grandson, Charles V. Robert de la Marche, Lord of Sedan, having made some incursions into his territories, the new emperor sent the Count of Nassau and the Lord Francisco with an army to retaliate. After taking several of the offender's towns, the emperor's generals captured Mozon which belonged to France, and also threatened Mezières in Champagne. Francis began to collect troops to resist them. Meantime he despatched Bayard, with a small company of infantry, to do what he could for Mezières. Finding the town to be poorly fortified, the Good Knight set to work to make the means of resistance; and worked so well himself, and inspired so much energy in others, that by the time the Count of Nassau and the Lord Francisco appeared, he was quite ready to receive them. He declined to entertain the proposal to come to terms, which the emperor's officers held out, and informed them that he meant to hold out until he should be relieved. The siege then commenced in good earnest, more than five thousand balls being thrown into the town in four days; but nothing could daunt

the courage of the defenders, who seemed insensible to fear while the Good Knight was with them. After a few days' brisk cannonading without much damage to the town, a quarrel broke out between the rival generals of the emperor, which ended in the raising of the siege, without an assault having been even attempted. For his able defence, Francis thanked the Good Knight most warmly. He made him a knight of his order, and gave him the command of a hundred men-at-arms. The Germans were then driven into Valenciennes, but not until after the whole country had been wasted by fire; for which the French paid back with interest, in Hainault.

At the commencement of the year 1524, the King of France had a large army encamped at Bingras in Italy, under Admiral Bonnivet. The Good Knight was with him; and at his instance, though much against his own judgment, occupied with a small force the village of Rebecq, near Milan. Here he was one night surprised by a force of six thousand Spaniards, who now held Milan, and who had come out on purpose when they heard how small a number of men Bayard had with him in Rebecq. A desperate encounter resulted in the evacuation of the village, but in the escape of its garrison; so that the Spaniards failed in their object, and got very little for their pains. On rejoining Bonnivet, high words passed between the two commanders, for not only was the occupation of Rebecq an ill-judged affair altogether, undertaken contrary to the advice of Bayard, but Bonnivet had taken no notice of the repeated applications of the Good Knight for assistance, while in possession.

Finding his camp very sickly and lacking in provisions, the admiral determined to withdraw. The command of the rearguard was given, as it ever was in retreats, to the Good Knight, who showed the enemy so bold a front whenever they attacked him, that the retreating army suffered no annoyance from their eager and watchful foe. One day, in making an attack upon the rear, the Spaniards threw out on each side of the road a large body of *haque-*

buteers and harquebuzers, whose pieces carry as large stones as a hacquebute on rest. The Good Knight, calm under the fire from these weapons as if he had been in his own house, was retreating his men steadily and in good order, when a stone from a hacquebute struck him on the loins and broke the great bone of the spine. When he felt the blow, he cried 'Alas! my God, I am a dead man!'

He kissed the hilt of his sword in sign of the cross, and saying aloud, 'Miserere mei Deus secundum magnam misericordiam tuam,' he became pale and faint, and was obliged to be lifted off his horse. When the news that the Lord de Bayard was mortally wounded spread through the armies, there was a universal lamentation. The Spaniards, to whom he had been so formidable, could not refrain from expressing their deep regret; and one of the principal of the captains, the Marquis of Pescara came to visit him as he lay dying, under a tree. The marquis was greatly affected, and declared he would give the fourth of his own blood if that could save so generous and so perfect a knight as Bayard. Most of the Spanish commanders came also, and delivered themselves of words of genuine sorrow. They made the short time which remained to the gentle knight in this world as comfortable as they could. They raised him on a bed and pitched a fine tent over the spot where he lay; and after his death, they delivered his body, with much stately ceremony, to his countrymen. In the French army there was a general and sincere mourning for one who was beloved by every soldier. The gentlemen of his own company were inconsolable. There was a feeling as if some very great calamity had befallen the nation; as indeed there had, for one of the bravest of Frenchmen, one of the noblest of men, had been snatched from among them.

The Constable de Bourbon, who had been engaged in a conspiracy against the King of France, and had fled the kingdom, was at that time in command of the Spanish army. He came to console Bayard, telling

him how distressed he was at his accident: but exhorting him to be of good cheer, for he would send for the best surgeons in the country, and by God's help he would be cured. When the Good Knight recognized him, he answered, 'My lord, I have no longer need of physicians for the body, but of those of the soul. I am not to be pitied who die with my honour unsullied; but you, who are in arms against your prince, your country, and your oath.'

Having confessed, he prayed in these words: 'My Father and Saviour! I beseech thee not to look upon the faults I have committed, and that I may experience thy great mercy rather than the rigour of thy justice.' And with these words he yielded his soul to God. His body was conveyed by his sorrowing followers to Grenoble, where a solemn service was held over it, in the church of Our Lady. It was then conducted in state to a monastery of Mynims, half a league from the town, founded by his good uncle, the Bishop of Grenoble, when it was interred amidst the tears of the whole population, more especially of the poor, the widows, and the orphans, to whom he was wont secretly to distribute alms.

I cannot do better than close this account of the 'gentle Lord de Bayard,' in the words of his 'loyal serviteur'—

'To enumerate the virtues of the Good Knight were superfluous. All things pass away but the love of God. Suffice it then to say that he loved and feared God above all things; he never swore or blasphemed; and in all his affairs and necessities he ever had recourse to Him; being fully persuaded that by Him, and His infinite goodness, all things are ordered; nor did he ever leave his chamber without recommending himself to Him in prayer. He loved his neighbour as himself, and never possessed a crown but it was at the service of the first who needed it. He was a great alms-giver, and gave his alms in secret; he succoured widows in distress, and during his life had given in marriage a hundred poor orphan girls, gentlefolk, and others. If a gentleman under his command was dismounted, he remounted him, and in a manner not to offend his delicacy, often exchanging a Spanish charger, worth two

or three hundred crowns, for a nag worth but six, and giving the gentleman to understand that the latter was just the horse to suit himself. So graciously did he confer his gifts. He was a sorry flatterer; and never swerved from speaking truth were it to the greatest of princes. He looked with contempt upon this world's wealth, and was at his death no richer than at his birth. In war none excelled him. In conduct he was a Fabius Maximus; in enterprise, a Coriolanus; and in courage and magnanimity, a second Hector—dreadful to the enemy, gentle and courteous to his friends. Three qualities

marked him for a perfect soldier. He was a greyhound in attack, a wild boar in defence, and a wolf in retreat. In short, it would take a good orator his life to recount all his virtues; I, who am unskilled in learning, cannot pretend to it. But I humbly pray all readers of this history to be indulgent to what I have written, for I have done my best; though far short of what was due to the praise of so perfect and virtuous a person as the Good Knight, without fear and without reproach—the gentle Lord de Bayard, whose soul may God of his grace receive into Paradise. Amen.'

THE ORDEAL FOR WIVES.

A Story of London Life.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE MORALS OF MAYFAIR.'

CHAPTER XVIII.

UNTO THIS LAST.

'COME down at once, Miss Fleming, come down, or you'll be too late. Your aunt's been "took" again.'

Esther started from her sleep—from a delicious dream in which she and Paul were together and unfettered; and saw Wilson standing by her side, frightened and useless, as is the manner of her class to be in all sudden emergencies, and with a face as white as her night-dress.

'Great God, Wilson! is Aunt Thalia in danger? and so well when I left her last night.'

'She was took all of a sudden, miss. I left the door of the dressing-room ajar, and I went in and looked at her before I got into bed, and she was sleeping beautiful, like an infant; and after I'd been asleep an hour, or it may be two, I heard a cry or groan like, and I thought to myself "she's took," and I started up and found her—so!'

And Wilson gave a ghastly pantomimic representation of her mistress's state by contorting her own face.

Esther drew on her dressing-gown and a shawl and ran down to Mrs. Tudor's room. From the time she was a child, she had been so often

and so solemnly impressed with the idea that she was never to enter that sanctuary unbidden, that, from mere force of habit, she stopped now, and tapped softly at the door.

'Lord love you, miss, you may go in,' said Wilson; 'she won't know you—she'll never know anything more in this world. Stop, if you're nervous, and I'll go in first.'

She went in softly, and pushing back the curtains from the head of the bed, disclosed Mrs. Tudor's unconscious form to Esther's gaze.

On the dressing-table, lit up by the flare of Wilson's hastily-lit untended candle, lay outspread (carelessly exposed as it was her wont to leave it at night) all the sacred dressing paraphernalia: the creams, the unguents, the false dark hair, the perfumes, the rouge-pots, the kalydors, of the dying woman. A set of pearl ornaments that she had worn the night before lay side by side with the empty card-purse and the velvet-bound prayer-book that Esther had always seen on her aunt's table—closed—since she was a child. On a couch at the foot of the bed was outspread the dress she had taken off, brocaded silk of exquisite French-grey hue; on the wall, sus-

1911

1912



Drawn by M. Ellen Edwards.

"UNTO THIS LAST."

See "The Ordeal for Wives." Chapter XIV.



pended in a fashion of Mrs. Tudor's own, for the due recovery of shape, was her last Parisian crinoline. Pearls and diamonds upon the dressing-table; silks and crinoline around the room; on the table by the bedside the silver night-lamp shedding its light, with ghastly fulness, upon Mrs. Tudor's face. Pearls and diamonds; gold and silver; rouge and kalydor and unclosed velvet prayer-book; and on the bed—what? A picture of mortality so fearful that for the first moment Esther shrunk back, sick and agast; an image of life (for life this surely could not be) with sense, with recognition, with consciousness, with all but breath, gone: without even the inalienable heritage, the last look of humanity—the look of pain—left upon the half-closed, sightless eyes and contorted features.

'She has been so ever since she was took,' said Wilson aloud; and leaning over her mistress charily, as one might do over a newly-unfolded mummy, or other unpleasant but curious object. 'Hearken to her breathing, Miss Fleming. I'd an uncle took in the pralises, and he breathed just so for seven hours and a half, and then died quite quiet and comfortable.'

Esther motioned her to be silent, and then bent, all her first horror gone, over the stonily-passive face upon the pillow.

'Aunt Thalia, can I do anything for you? Is there any one you would like to see?'

But not the faintest movement in any part of the frame gave token that Mrs. Tudor heard.

'You might as well begin talking to the dead at once, Miss Fleming,' said Wilson. 'Don't you know that you should never speak to a dying person, nor yet touch of 'em? It makes them die harder. You watch here, and don't move and don't speak, and I'll put on a few things and go rouse Miss Whitty and the house. The doctor must be sent for, of course, for form's sake!'

Wilson withdrew to her own apartment, which communicated with Mrs. Tudor's, and made quite an elaborate toilette—black silk

dress, lace collar and sleeves, cork-screw-ringlets, and brooch—while Esther stood and listened, silent and awe-struck, to each unnaturally-heavy, stertorous breath that the dying woman drew. The minutes appeared to pass like long hours when she was left alone—Wilson having swept away with the candle downstairs—in the great dim-lighted room with her unconscious charge. It seemed to her as if every one of those fearful breathings must be the last; as though it were impossible life could still dwell upon those rigid lips which, seen in this light, and by her awe-struck imagination, seemed already changing every moment—not into death, merely, but into death in some of its most fearful and repulsive after-stages.

Esther had often pictured Mrs. Engleheart dying, when she had seen her sitting in the porch at Countisbury, with the sunset fading from her old blanched face; and the thought had always struck her then that such a death would be lovely—lovelier than anything in the bereft, helpless woman's life could have been for years. But the suddenness of Mrs. Tudor's seizure, its physical horror, its environment of jewels and gewgaws and vanities, smote upon the girl's heart with an almost supernatural terror. She felt that Wilson's heartless common-places were better than this silence, Wilson herself, in her silk and ringlets, a more human thing to look upon than the reflection which half a dozen mirrors gave back at every turn of Mrs. Tudor's dying face; and it was an intense relief to her when she at last heard a tremulous knocking at the door, and saw the figure of Miss Whitty standing there in her dressing-gown.

Now Miss Whitty was not by any means an unfeeling person at heart; and she came and sniffed, in a becoming manner, at the first sight of her benefactress. But Miss Whitty had seen a great deal of death (by her own account had closed the eyes of half the distinguished people in the land), and Esther, to whom death, or even illness, was new, thought there was something extraordinarily hard and professional in

her general treatment of the sick room.

She walked on tiptoes, it is true—all women of the Whitty class do that—with a creaking exasperating caution that, if the patient had not been long stages beyond all outward discomfiture now, must have driven her dying brain to distraction; but she also poked violently at the expiring fire—looking round at the bed between each blow of the poker, as much as to note what effect the noise was taking upon the patient; she got ready perfectly useless hot water; she drew some blinds up and some curtains down, obviously with no more coherent purpose than that of producing as much indirect disturbance as possible; finally, and when the doctor's muffled step was already on the stairs, she took the velvet prayer-book from the toilet-table; seated herself, sniffing again, by the head of the bed; and, when the handle of the door turned, began to weep audibly over the place at which the book had chanced to open—the Public Baptism, I believe, of such as are of riper years.

Mrs. Tudor's medical attendant was the most popular ladies' physician in the place. Is it necessary to say that the popular ladies' physician of an English watering-place must possess a tall and graceful figure, longish hair waving back from his temples, and a fine white hand with almond-shaped nails. His eyes fell upon Esther Fleming's handsome face the moment he entered, and he gave her a smile which, while duly chastened by the deep melancholy of the occasion, was sufficiently pronounced to show the dazzling whiteness of his teeth. Then he advanced to Mrs. Tudor's side, looked at her, touched her pulse for a moment or two, and folded his arms across his chest. It was his favourite pose; and a good one. At this particular moment he speculated as to whether the dark-eyed young person behind the curtains thought so too.

'Is there—is there any hope?' whispered Miss Whitty, with great agitation. 'We—we should like to know the worst!'

'When was Mrs. Tudor taken ill?'

'About an hour ago, sir.' And Wilson, with one of Mrs. Tudor's cambric handkerchiefs to her eyes, placed herself between the physician and Miss Whitty. 'I was watching in my room, and I heard a noise, sir, and I knew it must be my poor lady, and I ran, and——'

'I know. And she has not spoken since? Go and get mustard for plaisters, and keep perfectly quiet.'

When Wilson had left the room, followed, after an ineffectual attempt at conversation, by Miss Whitty, Esther came up to the doctor's side.

'Will there be any change, or is this the last?' she whispered.

'The last, in all human probability.' And so sympathizing was this good physician that he took the girl's cold hand and held it warmly in his own. 'I will stay here for a time. You must try to keep yourself calm.'

And he looked down into her face, and remarked the exceeding length and darkness of the lashes that rested on her white cheek.

'Thank you, I am glad you can stay. It is fearful to see her in such a state, and to be able to do nothing for her.'

Esther went back to her place at the other side of the bed; the doctor seated himself and began to look at his nails—it is a great resource to a doctor to have almond-shaped nails; and then, after a few minutes, the women came back, and some fruitless remedies were tried and put away again; and then the room lapsed back into silence, and the winter morning dawned.

Dawned, pale and ghastly, upon the livid face of the dying woman; upon Miss Whitty, yawning over her prayer-book; upon the favourite physician, with his handsome eyes fast shut; upon Wilson, with the ostentatious cambric to her face, and making sharp calculations as to the amount of spoil that was likely to fall into her hands. Dawned upon velvet draperies and silks and diamonds and pearls! the Beulah within whose pleasant shades one was waiting for the messenger from the Shining City; dawned upon all the worldly pomp and vanity of this pilgrim of fourscore years, who

was now to cross the dark river, unwept-for and alone!

They never knew the precise moment at which the great change came. Mrs. Tudor gave no more sign of consciousness to the last than she had done from the first moment when she was struck down speechless and motionless. Those who watched her knew not the exact moment at which the spirit fluttered from its prison; but before eight o'clock that morning the prison-house was vacant and cold; and Miss Whitty was sealing strips of paper across the drawers and cupboards; and Wilson was showing extraordinary zeal in getting all small and portable articles put into order; and every one who approached the chamber of death was already as sympathetic and obsequious in their attentions to Miss Fleming, the heiress, as they had been to Mrs. Tudor herself, not twelve short hours before.

We all know the beautiful legend of Addison's deathbed. I hold the moral of deathbeds like Thalia Tudor's to be not a whit less instructive.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE MAMMON OF UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.

For two days of her life Esther Fleming knew the sensation of being a reputed heiress. For two days every one told her she was the inheriress of her Aunt Thalia's money, and treated her, under this belief, with the greatest consideration and kindness.

Colonel Dashwood insisted upon taking all necessary melancholy arrangements off the bereaved young creature's hands; Mrs. Dashwood, merging sectarian differences in the broadest philanthropy, offered to come and read with her; Milly hoped, in a multitude of tiny notes, that dearest Esther would never forget how she, Millicent, had been her earliest friend; the good physician was personally anxious about her looks; Wilson recollected she had liked Miss Fleming's expression from the first moment she ever set her eyes upon her; Miss Whitty

made many meek demonstrations of personal regard, with suggestions as to the necessity in which every young lady of fortune must stand of a middle-aged person, accustomed to the best walks of society, for travelling companion, confidant, house-keeper, or chaperon.

For two days only: on the third, Mrs. Tudor's solicitor came down from London, curt, cold, business-like, and then Esther Fleming's one Aladdin-like dream was over. Mrs. Tudor's whole capital had been sunk, five-and-thirty years before, in a life annuity. The office would defray the expenses of the funeral (taking the trouble from Colonel Dashwood's hands), and all Mrs. Tudor's personal property—consisting solely of trinkets, clothes, and pictures—was bequeathed, by will, to her dear great-niece and god-child, Esther Fleming.

I ask no mature reader to sympathize with Miss Fleming's fatuity on the occasion; but I think many people, under one-and-twenty, will, at least, believe me when I record the fact that her first sensation, on hearing of her regained poverty, was one of joy. Amidst all the obsequious flattery of the last two days, one heavy, one crushing thought had never left her: she must hold to Oliver now. Poor, she stood on equal terms with him; nay, was not he, with the worth of his commission, far higher in the social scale than the penniless country girl living in a farm-house on the charity of very poor relations? But rich, sought after, in a better position than his own, she knew that she would never have moral courage enough to be true to herself and to her own newly-discovered feelings. How could she make him believe that her change towards him had arisen, in reality, before Mrs. Tudor's death? How take back, in her worldly prosperity, the allegiance she had been so prompt to swear when her youth and love were all the wealth she had to offer him, all the wealth that he had sought?

Simple, uncalculating, unworldly by nature, I maintain that these were literally the first and bitter re-

flections of Esther's heart when she found herself regarded as Mrs. Tudor's undoubted heiress. That she was free again, free to look in Oliver's face and say, 'I like you too well, I honour myself too much, to marry you,' was her first thankful emotion when the altered manner of all her fresh-found friends and dependants made her realise fully that she was again plain Esther Fleming of Countisbury—Esther Fleming the heiress no longer.

'And all I can say is, that I expected it from the first,' wrote Joan Engleheart, in her bitter letter on the occasion. 'Selfish and worldly she has lived, selfish and worldly she has gone—to the place where such people go! Thalia Tudor has done a bad deed. May God reward her for it! And I command you to buy no shred of mourning, beyond what you can find of black among her wardrobe; no, not so much as a new black ribbon to your bonnet. We don't mourn her, and we won't mock heaven by pretending we do. Take good heed of her jewels as you travel. The emerald set is the best. Sew them, as I showed you once, about your person, and prate to no one of what you've got. Your proposal of giving the women Whitty and Wilson any of her clothes, is the proposal of a fool, and I forbid you to give away one farthing's worth. You will want it all, child, and the thirty pounds a year gone too, and everything rising as it does. With all her avarice, you may be sure *these sharpers* preyed enough upon the old woman while she lived. I don't understand your fine sentiments about having escaped a great many bad things in escaping money. I never brought you up to talk such idiocy. Money is a good thing, and you have missed it, like the rest of us, and your life will be one of work and hardship, as mine has been. Come home directly after the funeral, and spend nothing on the road.—Your friend,

'JOAN ENGLEHEART.'

And then, on a morsel of paper, furtively slipped inside the cover of the letter, these words: 'Dearest Etty.—There's something in the

world better than money, and you have got it.—DAVID ENGLEHEART.'

No relation of Mrs. Tudor's save Esther Fleming went to the funeral; no tears were shed, or attempted to be shed, when all that remained of

'The toll and grief of fourscore years,
Put up in a white sheet tied with two knots,'

went to its last rest. In high spirits, and a new black silk, Mrs. Wilson had betaken herself to a fresh place, with better wages, that very morning. In the afternoon Miss Whitty went out, primed with funereal news, on a round of visits, and Esther was left alone.

She had not been in the least degree depressed, as I have said, by Mrs. Tudor's disinheriting her; but on this afternoon a great weight did seem to hang upon her spirits. A funeral, like a marriage, leaves the mind too highly wrought for any of the unexciting employments of the common days of life; and this whether we have felt any really strong concern or not in the person married or buried. Joan's letter of the morning had brought Esther Fleming back vividly to the future that lay before her at Countisbury. She would break with Oliver, would return home, and then—what? What zest could she take in the old childish interests now?—the household work, the summer walks with David, the winter readings by the little parlour fire? Who that has tasted of the first (alas! that it should be so)—the best draught of passion, can look forward to a return of the pure, untroubled past without a shudder? She wanted to be near Paul; to hear the hum of the same London life as he heard; to walk along the streets, where, by faintest possibility, she might one day chance to see his face among the crowd. What had she to do with Countisbury? She was as much severed from it—from the low grey house, the shady garden walks, the woods where she had walked with Oliver—as though the time could be measured by years, not weeks, since she left it last. A death lay between that time and this—the death of her own first youth; of the childish, happy youth that Oliver

Carew's love had never so much as stirred.

Thinking these things, beside the fire, with her head bent down between her hands, Esther sat through the fading winter afternoon; and so wrapt in her own dull prospects was she, that when a loud double knock came suddenly at the street-door it scarcely served to rouse her an instant from her abstraction. No one could be calling for her on the day of the funeral, and if visitors did come, the people of the house had orders to say that Miss Fleming was not well, and wished to be undisturbed. What, indeed, could the poor disappointed young lady wish to hear of condolence or exhortation or cheerfulness on such a day as this?

'But the gentleman says he is sure you would see him, Miss Fleming. A young gentleman—quite a young gentleman, miss.'

'Not—not the gentleman who used to come to see me—' and Miss Fleming started up with suddenly awakened interest—'I mean, to see poor Mrs. Tudor?'

'Oh, dear no, not Mr. Chichester,' explained the landlady compassionately (does not every member of the race know, by instinct, whether a man is rich or poor?); 'a very fine gentleman, miss. Tall, and with long, fair mustachios, and quite the air of an officer about him.'

It was Oliver. The fierce beating of Esther's guilty heart told her that. Oliver, and she had not conned her part through; had not schooled her tongue into one of the expressions wherewith to confess her guilt.

'I will see this gentleman. I believe I know who it is. He is an old friend of our family: ask him to come up, please.'

She clasped her hands together rigidly; she called up every thought of Paul to strengthen her now in her supreme sudden need. The landlady, with thoughts intent upon her upholstery looking its best before the stranger, drew down the blinds and lit the gas; and then there was a minute's respite—if respite that awful century could be called, during which Esther heard his step,

his voice upon the stairs—and Oliver Carew entered the room.

CHAPTER XXX.

BROKEN OFF.

She walked forward steadily, and with outstretched hands, to meet him; but for the life of him Oliver Carew could not have tried at that moment to take Esther Fleming in his arms and kiss her.

What is it that makes us all know intuitively when people have ceased to love us? The eyes, the lips, are there, just as when they told us their last fond falsehood; the hand is ready for us to grasp, the cheek for us to kiss, and lo! a spectre, the ghost, perhaps, of our unknown rival, steps between and freezes us with awful foreboding of that which is to come.

Oliver Carew had as good an opinion of his own powers as perhaps any man in England, and Esther—a thousand-fold handsomer than when he left—Esther, softer, more womanly, more shy than he had ever seen her; her downcast cheeks flushed crimson, her lips silent and trembling—was within a yard of his arms, and he never offered to take her in them, or so much as raise her cold hand to his lips.

'I have startled you, Esther. You did not expect to see me in England so soon. I only landed yesterday, and had not time to write and tell you I was coming. Esther, are you glad to see me?'

She raised her eyes slowly to his face.

'You—you have come in a time of trouble,' she stammered. 'My Aunt Thalia was buried to-day.'

'And you are alone? My poor little Esther!' He took her hand again and clasped it more warmly; 'how glad I am that I came on to Bath to-night.'

Would he kiss her now? Looking so close down on the delicious temptation of that fresh face, was the spectre laid already? I suppose some intuition made Esther Fleming think so; for, with the quick tact that the simplest of her sex possesses, she managed

to return to her place beside the fire, to make Oliver Carew take a chair at (at least) three yards distance from her, and then went back, just as though he had said and looked nothing in reply, to her own first remark. 'Yes, you have returned in a time of trouble. My Aunt Thalia was buried to-day.'

Her fingers began to trifle with the folds of her black dress. Mr. Carew watched her closely. Had she come into possession of her aunt's money, and did she wish to be quit of her engagement for that reason?

It was not a noble suspicion. But Oliver really knew very little of Esther, beyond her soft complexion and long eyelashes; and the school in which he had been brought up is one apt to make young men have many suspicions with regard to young ladies. How would it be to let her play her own game out? withhold the secret of his birth and of his fortune, which five minutes before he had had such generous intentions of disclosing, and so let the foolish boy-and-girl entanglement end? There were plenty of other fair women besides Esther Fleming in the world: fair women who, if they were mercenary like her, could, at least, bring equal birth and education and rank to his own as their dowry.

Her first faltering words made Mr. Carew rather ashamed of himself.

'Yes, I am in trouble. The death, even of a very old person like my Aunt Thalia, is solemn, although one can't, of course, pretend to feel real grief for it; and then, too,' stealing a quick look at his face, 'I have had to bear a great deal of condolence from friends during the last few days. My Aunt Thalia's money dies with her, instead of coming to me as every one thought it would.'

Oliver sprang up and was at her side in a moment.

'Esther, what does that matter to you? Why need you trouble about anything to do with money?'

'I don't trouble,' she spoke very quick and decided, for she wished to spare him the humiliation of

softening before her; 'I don't trouble at all. I said only I had had to bear the condolence of friends. For the money itself, I am glad, yes, very glad, it has not come to me. I don't want money. I don't envy rich people their lives. I have been brought up to work, and a life of work will suit me best.'

'Esther, you shall never work.'

It was all useless. She could not stave off the inevitable moment, the horrible pain of confessing the entire truth. Oliver's whole face was softening (he had taken a place close beside her on the sofa); his arm was already almost round her waist.

'Esther, I, too, have some news to tell you. I am in a very different position to what I held when I left you last. My cousin, of whom I have spoken to you, is dead, and I——'

He had got her hand in his, and all the old lover-like manner was returning fast. The blood rushed hot and confused across Esther's brain; she knew not, she cared not, what words they were that rose to her tongue to speak. All she did know was that she must tell him; that Carew's lips must never touch her lips, his hands clasp her hands as they were clasping them now.

'I must not deceive you, Oliver. If I could I would have said this in a letter, but I didn't know where to write, and I was afraid the letter might be lost. We were very young, you know, when you met me at Countisbury, last summer, and our engagement was made hastily, before, indeed, we knew anything of each other's characters; and—and isn't it far better to speak the truth out, than to go on blindly as we began, and both be miserable for life?'

People never say exactly what they mean to say, nor, indeed, exactly the truth, on occasions like this; but had Esther taken a quarter of an hour to prepare herself, and to soften down the coming humiliation, it would have made no difference. The form of words in which his dismissal was couched mattered nothing to Oliver Carew. The monstrous idea of Esther—Esther, poorer now than she had

ever been—rejecting him—*him*, Oliver Carew, just as he was going to tell her of his newly-acquired rank and fortune! was all that his mind could grasp: and, indeed, for a few seconds, he positively could not bring himself to believe that the girl was speaking seriously. He could compass, you recollect, the idea of her giving him up because of her own superior wealth; but to change from any other motive, to change when he was just going to be the most generous man living, in keeping to his own foolish engagement—no, it was impossible! The simple creature was awed, as she well might be, by thinking of any further difference having arisen in their position in addition to that enormous one which already existed—and this was all.

‘Don’t fear, Esther, I shall never alter to you. We don’t know a very great deal of each other yet, as you say; but I know quite enough of your goodness, your—your—’ a certain determined look in her eyes hurried him—‘your truth, to make me sure that I have chosen wisely.’

‘Oliver, I have not been true. I have changed utterly since you saw me last.’

He started up, and the colour rushed into his face.

‘Not true? and you have written, you have pretended to keep to your engagement all this time?’

‘Yes, I *have* written, I *have* striven to keep to my engagement to you. I wouldn’t believe for a long time that it was possible I could really have been mistaken in what I thought I felt, but I know it now—I know it for certain now—and I ask you to forgive me for ever having, even for one hour, deceived you. I deceived myself first; don’t you see that? I hoped and prayed that I might come back to my faith to you, and when I found it was not to be so—do believe me when I say that my sufferings were horrible. I am lowered in my own sight as much, I think, as it is possible to be lowered in yours.’

Now Esther Fleming was just acting as well as it was possible for her to act; as truthfully, as honestly, as any woman ever acted in confessing

her own infidelity. But Oliver recognized neither generosity, nor truth, nor honour. He was wounded to the core; pierced in a deeper feeling far than his love: and smarting with all the first cruel smart of outraged vanity, he spoke:—

‘I might have expected this. I might have expected that a love so quickly won wouldn’t have overmuch root. I have been a fool. Not one man in a hundred would have held to such an engagement as a serious one. You have extricated us both well from a ridiculous position, and I have to thank you for taking the onus of doing so upon yourself.’

Then Esther’s eyes flashed fire, and her cheeks glowed.

‘You speak very ill when you speak so, Mr. Carew. My love for you was not light; my engagement to you did not place you in any ridiculous position. I was only a girl, an ignorant country girl, when I met you last summer, and your pretty speeches and your town manners flattered me. Yes, this is the truth, sir, and I mistook my own pleased vanity for love; and when you were away I dreamed of you, and in my dreams made a hero of you—quite different to what I know you really are. And then I came away. I came away from Countisbury, Mr. Carew, and I met some one—not like you at all—some one with plain manners, and who never flattered me, and, even while I still wrote to you, I came (in spite of all I tried) to find out what feeling one *should* have to the man one married, and I know quite well I never, no, not for a single hour, have had that feeling to you.’

Mr. Carew’s very lips grew white with rage.

‘You are awfully outspoken, Miss Fleming! open and frank where most other young ladies, I should think, would be silent. As you are so extraordinarily communicative, you will surely not withhold my successor’s name from me? Who is the gentleman with plain manners and an unflattering tongue who is so happy now as to have Miss Fleming for his promised wife?’

‘I am no man’s promised wife,

Mr. Carew. I shall never marry while I live! And thinking of Paul, all indignation died down in her face. 'I began my life with a great mistake in becoming engaged to you. I shall end it, mistakenly, perhaps, still, but with truth. I shall never change again, and I shall never marry.'

She was more than handsome: she was lovely at this moment; with tears just quivering in her dark eyes; with her hot cheeks glowing; with a suddenly-subdued, mournful expression lighting up all her face. In the full flush of her careless beauty, in the midst of her love for him at Countisbury, Oliver had never so coveted to possess her as—with the accustomed fatuity of human nature—he did now that he had irrevocably lost all chance of ever doing so.

'Esther, forgive me what I said. I should have kept my temper better if I didn't feel so distractedly miserable at the thought of losing you. Esther, I *won't* give you back your promise. This ridiculous fancy about a man who, you confess, doesn't love you, shall not make my life and your own miserable. I won't ask you to marry me now, or for a long time, if you choose, only,—he came close to her; he bent down till she felt his breath upon her cheek; he stole his arm with gentle force round her waist—'only feel for me as you did last summer; only feel the childish dream, the flattered vanity, whatever you said it was. I will trust to time for the rest.'

He held her close; and his hand trembled, and his voice shook in spite of all his efforts to keep it steady. For Esther, although she never faltered in the slightest degree in her resolution, she did, at this moment, feel her part a very hard one to play out; did think that she liked Oliver Carew as much as was possible—stopping immeasurably short of love; and that she had behaved cruelly, perfidiously, wickedly altogether in getting to like Paul so much better than her affianced lover.

Very young people are so fearfully thin-skinned: it is such an agony to them to have to sink from

the highest place in any one's good opinion. And then, Oliver was so really and seriously agitated, and agitation is so contagious. It was comparatively easy work to tell him everything when he was standing before her with supercilious affectation of indifference, and making sarcastic speeches in depreciation of their love and of its genuineness.

'I couldn't go back even to what I felt last summer; and—and even if I could, Mr. Carew, I don't think that kind of feeling would be the right sort to begin married life with. I like you very much indeed, just I think as I could like a brother if I had one; but I look—don't be angry again, please—I look upon you as a boy, and I feel that I ought to consider the man I marry as superior to me in all things, you know.'

She meant this as a kindly, gentle way of putting his love aside and retaining his friendship; but not one form, out of the many stereotyped forms of rejection, could have angered Mr. Carew more. Superior. He did not stop to ask himself whether the implied superiority were social or mental, or only moral: the monstrous adjective itself was what utterly staggered him. Superior! Esther Fleming superior to *him*! He loosed his arm, as though it had been stung, from her waist; he stood himself at the space of about two or three feet away from her; he looked straight and with unspeakable fierceness into her face.

'Miss Fleming, I think I understand you rightly. You consider yourself superior to me?'

'I never said so, Mr. Carew. I said I felt that the man I married ought to be superior to me in all things.'

'That is precisely the same—a mere play upon words. Perhaps you will have the goodness to tell me the exact tokens of inferiority to which you allude.'

Esther was never so pained in her life. She had loved, or pretended to herself to love, this man; had promised to become his wife; and now she was to stand and look in his face and, if she spoke truth at all, inform him that she looked upon him as a

well-grown school-boy possessing not a tithe even of the intellect which nature had bestowed upon herself.

'I would rather much say no more, Mr. Carew. All I wish is that we should part as friends.'

But Mr. Carew had no such wish. He interrupted her angrily as she attempted to stammer out some softening excuses; and the first sound of his voice aroused Esther's scarcely stifled pride.

'You have mistaken our position from the first, Miss Fleming; and, after what you have just said, I can have no delicacy in setting you right now. I am not the poor farmer's son that in a foolish moment I represented myself to you in Devonshire. I have prospects—I should rather say I am already in a position, wholly unsuited to yourself and the life to which you have been brought up. What these are, what even my name is now, it does not matter for me to tell you. We are not at all likely to meet again, and if we did, it would be a meeting in which recognition would be impossible to us both. All I wish to say to you is, that in giving me up you are giving up a very great deal more than you can possibly dream of, and also, as I before said, are taking the pain of breaking off a most foolish entanglement out of my hands. Miss Fleming, good-bye!'

I am very sure that Oliver Carew was never so bombastic, so silly, so nearly approaching to mean vulgarity as when he delivered himself of this speech. But, considering his age, his vanity, and the really great social advantages that he knew himself to possess over Miss Fleming, I cannot say that I greatly wonder at the outbreak. It is such a fearfully disgusting thing to a man to be deliberately rejected; such a fearful humiliation, when he has supposed any amount of human superiority to rest on his side, to be told kindly, gently, that he is too young, too mentally inferior, for a foolish girl of eighteen to look up to!

'Good-bye to you, Miss Fleming,' he repeated grimly; 'I will not intrude myself upon you any more.'

Then Esther raised her eyes full

to his. She was very quiet; but she prepared to speak with a fixed lip, with a scarlet spot bright upon each cheek, just as she used to be when she was a child, and Miss Joan would vainly try to argue or whip her into confessing some fault she had not committed.

'Mr. Carew, shall I tell you what I think of you?'

'Do simply what you please, Miss Fleming.'

'I think you generous and open-hearted up to a certain point—the point at which anything like real self-sacrifice begins. You would have held to your word and married me, in spite of all the difference of position that you tell me of; that I believe. But you have no spark of the true and manly generosity which should have made you honour me for breaking our engagement, and shrink from saying one unnecessary word to take any more away from my self-respect. You are not superior to me, Mr. Carew. You may be the son of a marquis or of a duke, but you are not superior to me; and married to you, I should have daily felt this, and have been lowered by the thought. You are young and good-looking; you say you have money and rank; there will be plenty of young ladies in the world ready to marry you, but not one of them will be a worthier wife to you than I should have been if you had married me.'

'Esther, you have never loved me.'

This short cutting of the knot that she, with trembling hands, had awkwardly striven to untie; this sole reply to the most arrogant speech of all her humble life, touched Esther's conscience more than any other six words that Oliver Carew could have chosen.

'I know I have not, Mr. Carew; that was why I felt so ashamed to see you. I mistook childish sentiment for deeper feeling, as I have already told you; and perhaps if I had not happened to meet with the person I have mentioned, I should have grown in time to care for you really.'

Hurt, angry, bitter though he was, Carew did yet, from his very

heart, admire Esther at this moment. It had done him good to be told so frankly that she considered herself his equal notwithstanding all the advantages of birth and money which he had told her of. It did him good to hear her frankly say that she had never really loved him. As in the lonely Devonshire moors she had inspired him with a perfectly new belief in the possible child-like purity of a *demoiselle à marier*, so now in her rejection of him, newly-acquired rank and riches and all, she afforded him—the young, the sought after, the spoilt Belgravian hero—an insight he had certainly never had before into the simple disinterestedness of which some human hearts are capable.

‘I was wrong to speak to you as I did, Miss Fleming. Will you forgive me before we part? Remember I am more hardly placed than you, for I have never changed.’

‘Forgive you? Oh, Mr. Carew, oh, Oliver, it is I that have every need to be forgiven! All I wish most now is that we should part friends. After—after having liked each other so much, there is something dreadful to me in the thought of our using such words to each other as we have done.’

She looked so irresistibly handsome, pleading to him, with her softened eyes and upturned face, that Oliver found it no hard matter, in spite of all his smarting vanity, to take her hand and hold it and make his peace at once and entirely.

Human nature is so constituted that the bitterest quarrel, the most final rupture, of a very young man and a very handsome woman, shall have more of love than of any other element in its composition. They were parting for ever; and Esther had deliberately rejected him; and the pride of both had been wounded to the quick within the last quarter of an hour: and yet, as Carew left the house, he felt that he would willingly give up all his newly-inherited wealth and rank to be able to call Esther his; while Esther, strong-minded though she believed herself, cried bitter tears, half for herself, half for Oliver, well on

into the dawn of the next winter day.

If women were to act instead of weep during the first twelve hours of reaction, I believe very few lovers would find their dismissal to be irrevocable!

CHAPTER XXXI.

A LOVER IN SPIKE OF HIMSELF.

But when all reaction was over; when she was able from the solitude of Countisbury to look back dispassionately upon her conduct; Esther Fleming knew that she would not recal Oliver if she could, knew that she had never loved him, knew that even her recollection of him, like every other thought and feeling of her nature, was becoming merged in one dream—one hopeless, one haunting, half-miserable, half-delicious dream—her passion for Paul.

I say ‘passion’ advisedly. Of the sentiments exchanged between Miss Fleming and Mr. Carew among the moors, I confess frankly my inability to speak; but in common, I fancy, with yourself, oh reader of ordinary experience, and more than five-and-twenty years, I feel myself tolerably competent to interpret the symptoms of that real and malignant disorder which had overtaken Esther now.

Shall we go through a record of them?—the old, old story; the burning pain; the torturing jealousy; the delirious dreams from which reason perpetually wakes up the sleeper with so sharp a stab of memory? Ah, well, ‘tis the one date that never quite grows old! The sentimental, and, I am ready to admit, the fairest, purest, brightest side of love is a blank to most of us many years before thirty; but no man or woman can ever quite rake out the ashes of that one portion of their lives when a strong and utterly hopeless passion held them in its grasp.

You deny this, madam, I know. You aver that the blooming spring, when you were engaged to poor Captain Johnson, unfortunately drowned off the coast of China, and the subsequent summer, when dear,

good Sir Obediah, your present happy possessor, was paying his addresses to you, are the seasons to which, from your calm unruffled matronhood, you look back, whenever you are foolish enough to look back to these sorts of things at all. But what of that packet of blurred letters that you burnt the night before you married Sir Obediah? What of the marginal annotations that may yet be faintly traced upon the pages of your unread Shelley? What of the fierce spasm at your heart upon that one evening of the year that you (and only another in the world save you) know to be an anniversary? Those two sanctioned matrimonial engagements, delightful though they must have been, and creditable to your character as a daughter and everything else, are not, madam, permit me to say, the seasons burnt in upon your memory. Do you recollect distinctly the colour of poor Captain Johnson's hair? Do you remember in the least clearly what Sir Obediah used to say during those lengthy afternoons when you had to submit to the affianced endearments within the sacred precincts of your mamma's back drawing room? Time and change and children wipe out all such nonsense from one's heart, you say. But then, they do *not* wipe out the details of those dark November nights when you used to sit, hour after hour, waiting with sickening eagerness to catch the first sound of a footfall on the pavement, the first sight of a face which, even while you looked upon it, you knew could never in truth be anything to you.

Don't you know that a painter will look back with a more tender yearning to his ambitious first picture that the critics laughed at, than to all the great works by which his name has been won? that the poem which the world rejects is the headstone of the temple in the poet's own heart? 'Tis simply an inherent part of human nature to remember the passionate, the miserable, the disappointed seasons of our lives more clearly than any other. And being a part of our nature, there is nothing especially to deny or blush at in the fact. You are no worse

wife to Sir Obediah because, once in three years, you look at the marginal notes upon the pages of your unread Shelley, or because, sitting among your children in the quiet autumn night, all the feverish unrest, all the madness, all the pain of those November nights of a dozen years ago, come back to you so vividly!

And as the hopeless passion of our own lives is the one that does not die for us, so the hopeless passion of others are the only ones in which, as grown men and women, we take anything like abiding and hearty interest. Look at all the great love-stories of the world—from Helen to Maggie Tulliver: is not every one of their heroines in love with another man than the rightful hero? and isn't that fatal infidelity just what we care most to hear about?

Esther Fleming was not in any respect a Helen; nor was she much of a heroine at all; but her passion for Paul was as strong, poor child, as the strictest exigencies of art could demand. She knew that he would never marry her; worse, that he was bound by ties stronger than death to another woman; also that, in all human probability, she would never again feel the pressure of his hand, never hear the sound of his voice while she lived.

And over that thought she brooded and sickened; sickened through the long bright summer, through autumn, through winter. Month succeeded month in ever-increasing nauseous monotony, and still her passion grew and strengthened. In time she got to portion out the day and night into hours, giving to each hour some imaginary employment for Paul, and in imagination living it out by his side. Can you imagine the desperate jealous misery that would follow upon such a plan? Waking or sleeping, at noonday or at midnight, he was never thoroughly absent from her thoughts; and yet every thought of him was still an image disconnected with herself; nay, more, was directly opposed to the possibility of his ever loving her.

If she could only see him—her heart would cry out in its bit-

terness—only see him, only breathe the same air he breathed, only live in London, in some street where she might, once or twice a month, perhaps, see him walk past her window, she thought she could bear her burthen. To see him, to be near him, might lay this phantom which her imagination seemed never tired of calling up with such cruel force, such mockery of life, in his absence.

A man or woman who could succumb thus at five-and-twenty to any grief, not strictly and exclusively personal, must be exceeding near a fool; but in a girl of eighteen this very intensity of prostration, this immense capacity for suffering, was a sign of strength. In proportion to the fierceness of the conflict would be the profoundness of the peace when it came.

During the dull winter days, when she would sit gazing unoccupied from her window upon the dreary waste of moorland round the house; during the sleepless nights, when she walked feverishly up and down before the picture which she called Paul's, in her little room, the cry would burst involuntarily from her hot lips—'Let me cease to suffer: let me cease to have this capability of loving!' And then his face would come before her; in an instant she would hear his voice; feel all the poisonous intoxication of his presence, and shudder lest her prayer be answered. Better die than lose him utterly! Better go through every accumulated pang that every successive hopeless day brought to her, than outlive her love, and go back to such a peace as the only one possible for her must be—the dead lethargy of indifference!

Now, strong though her love undoubtedly was, I am far from thinking that Esther Fleming could have suffered thus had she been living in any ordinary round of social life instead of the Devonshire moors. You may suffer, God knows! as much in London or Paris as in the remotest country village of Yorkshire; but you suffer differently. More keenly, I think, while it lasts, but with an anguish that is much sooner over. You put your skeleton assiduously out of sight for a great many hours,

at least, out of the twenty-four. You dress, ride, talk, dine, dance, flirt during each interval between the hours when you and your skeleton stand face to face; and, sharp work though it may be at first to go through all these duties, you finish by finding that they have done one good service to you—helped you, marvellously quickly, to be untrue to yourself! In the country you not only have positively nothing to take you from your trouble; you have time to idealize it. As solitude had developed Esther's fancy for Mr. Carew into what, had she never met Paul, would have passed for love, so now it developed her love for Paul himself into passion: passion heightened, of course, by its hopelessness and absolute severance from its object.

Neither Joan nor David could be blind to the change in her. David, poor fellow, on her first return had ventured once to comment on her pale cheeks and sobered spirits, accounting for the symptoms, in his simple way, by the intensity of her regard for Mr. Carew, the amount of emotion she must have sustained on meeting him again. Her answer undeceived him promptly:—

'I feel nothing whatever about Mr. Carew. I am engaged to him no longer. We found out our mistake mutually, and remedied it in the only way possible. Please, David, never mention Mr. Carew, or love, or any such folly to me again. If I suffer, I like to suffer silently. It will all be over before long.'

Such an answer was enough for David, and he succumbed to it, and got accustomed to Esther's pale cheek, and silent tongue, and joyless tread: indeed, if I mistake not, was sensible of a certain selfish satisfaction in seeing her thus, and in thinking that her love, by whatever violent death it had died, *was* dead—her heart, however miserable, untenanted. This pale, listless woman was, after all, nearer to him than the blooming girl had been—the girl full of life and the dreams of life, wandering through the woods where she had walked with Oliver, and making him, whether he willed it or no, the confidant of her hopes.

But Joan, being a woman, and consequently not in love with Esther, saw much nearer into the truth. If the girl, of her own free will, did not choose to marry Oliver—and this much-persevering endeavour had enabled Miss Joan to worm out—her pallor and silence and listlessness could none of them be laid to Mr. Carew's charge. You might fret for a week or so after the termination of an idiotic fancy, Miss Joan argued; but you wouldn't go pale for months, and heave long sighs, when you should be taking your food with an appetite, and walk up and down your bedroom till morning (as she often heard Esther do) unless some faint spark, if not of hope, of expectation, mingled still with your grief.

Joan Engleheart's personal experiences of love were scant: an attorney's clerk, seen for two days at seventeen, and David Engleheart now, being the raw material out of which they were fashioned. But women, the hardest, the least loved of them, possess inspirations, that come not to the aid of men, in the art of uprooting the secrets of other persons' love affairs. Before Esther had returned six weeks Joan knew that she was in love with another man than Oliver; by winter all that she needed to learn was the name of Oliver's successor. Of his existence she was as convinced as she was of her own determination to marry David, or of any other accomplished fact of her life.

One December afternoon, the snow falling thick, the bitter night already gathering on the hills, Miss Engleheart abruptly walked into Esther's bedroom.

The girl was sitting there as usual; no, more acutely suffering than usual, for she had received a letter that day from Jane Dashwood in which Paul's name was carelessly mentioned; and when Joan entered she never sought to explain why she was leaning against the window without work or book in her hands, but turned her face almost sullenly towards the pane, against which the drifting snow was beating with the unutterably dreary sound that only the indwellers of a home twelve

miles away from the nearest market-town can appreciate.

Miss Engleheart walked straight up to the little old engraving—whose position had mysteriously changed of late, being now exactly opposite Esther's bed—and stared at it intently.

'I don't see the good of keeping that rubbishing old print any longer,' she remarked, incisively. 'The frame wouldn't be bad, regilt with some of the stuff out of David's bottle; and I'll mount that nice little drawing of Hatherton school and put it in for you.'

And Joan raised her hand to the picture.

Then Esther turned round with flushing face and kindling eyes.

'That print is mine, Joan. You called it mine when I was a child, and mine I have always considered it. I don't want it touched. It isn't rubbish. The drawing of Hatherton school is rubbish. I should hate to look at it.'

'You are aware, I suppose, that you were born at Hatherton, Esther?'

'Perfectly aware of it, Joan. If there was one thing wanting to make me detest the drawing it would be found in the fact that I *was* born at Hatherton.'

'By which amiable speech you mean me to infer that you wish you had never been born at all, I conclude?'

'I don't think I wanted you to infer anything, cousin. Life isn't so very delightful that one needs an especial memorial of the place where one first entered upon it, I think. For the rest, I like the little portrait in that old frame. I like it better than anything else I possess, and I don't wish it interfered with.'

'Which of your friends do you consider it like, child?'

Esther turned her face again to the window.

'The snow lies deep in all the drifts already, Joan. I never saw it yet lie so deep before New-year's day. We shall have a fearful winter.'

'We shall have a cold one, Esther. You used to be never tired of the hard weather, and the frost and snow, and your walks upon the frozen

moors with David. Perhaps the winter wouldn't seem such a fearful prospect to you if you were to try to employ yourself as you used.'

'I don't see that there is anything for me to do, Joan. I read as much as I can read every day; I walk out regularly; I do all you ask me to do about the house.'

'And take not an iota of interest in anything, Esther. You read, you walk, you work, mechanically; and then steal away to this cold room, without a fire, and sit, staring intently out of the window, or gazing up at yonder old fool in the picture-frame, by the hour together. Whose face do you consider it like, child? Tell me that; and I shall know as much as I care to know of your secret;—only don't go through the unnecessary deceit of saying that you think it like Mr. Oliver Carew.'

'I never say things that are not true, as you know perfectly well, cousin. That little engraving is like—' and chilled though her blood was, it rushed hotly here to Esther's face—'like some one I met while I was with Aunt Thalia last year. His name doesn't matter. You will never see him: in all probability I shall myself never see him again while I live.'

Miss Engleheart bent her face forward, and looked straight as an arrow between the girl's eyes.

'Esther,' she remarked, curtly, after carrying on this agreeable process for about two minutes, 'I mean you to leave Countisbury.'

'Cousin Joan!'

'You shall go out, as you have often wished to do, as a governess; or I will write and ask Jemima Watson to invite you to Hatherton, which, considering that she is your own mother's cousin-german, and has never given you anything but a three-and-sixpenny Bible in her life, wouldn't be so very much for her to do; but leave home you shall. I know the kind of effect that pining for love will have upon a girl of your age; and after the way that I have brought you up, and your getting so well over measles, and scarlatina, and all the rest of it. But this is what comes of fashionable schools and gay Bath acquaintances.

A year and a half ago you were a hearty country girl, full of honest enjoyment in your every-day life, and now—'

'Now,' finished Esther, as Miss Joan rose and commenced a vicious tattoo with her sharp fingers upon the window-panes,—'now I am useless and without spirit, and the duties and amusements of my life are alike without taste to me. There's no use in our telling untruths to each other, Joan; it has never answered since I was a child; we won't begin it now. You may or may not be right in saying that I am pining for love, but you are perfectly correct in your description of my state; and I believe you are right in saying I should leave home. Only, not to Jemima Watson, cousin—not to another country-house and to more idleness and brooding. I want work: if work lay before me, I *would* do it; yes, and in time get a kind of consolation out of it.'

She threw the book aside that had been lying in her listless hands; then walked opposite to the little picture, and standing there, seemed to take silent counsel with that unknown face. Did it comfort her? did a sudden hope of meeting Paul—bound to another woman, irrevocably severed from her although he might be—thrill through her heart? I think too well of Esther's principles to give her credit for succumbing to so lax an impulse; but I am bound to say that her numbed hands had suddenly grown warm with life; that a genial sensation was stirring at her heart again; that on all her face, even in that dim light, there were visible signs to Miss Joan of the old hearty childish interest in a new and welcome plan.

'Talk of love, talk of constancy!' she observed to David, ten minutes afterwards; for Joan was too acute a judge of human nature, too practised a tactician ever to push up any advantage too close at first; and instead of stopping to argue with Esther, had swooped down upon David at once, in his little study, with the fell news of the girl's approaching departure. 'Love! constancy! in a girl of nineteen. Yes, as much of it as you choose, and to

as great a number of men in rotation. First, love and constancy to Carew; then, for the last six months, love and constancy to this fool of whom this engraving keeps her in mind; and now, flushing cheeks and dancing eyes at the first word of going from home, and so running a chance of adding another name to the list. I'll tell you what it is, David Engleheart,' and Miss Joan turned her back to the hearth in a manner not usually affected by the softer sex, 'romance is a very pretty thing, and youth and beauty are very pretty things; but we are too old and plain and stupid to understand them, or to try to keep them under our wing any longer. Esther must leave Countisbury.'

'I—I don't think I understand you, Joan.'

'Then I will be perfectly straightforward and above-board, David.' Oh, how the poor wretch winced at this well-known preamble to any of Joan's most cutting speeches. 'I will be perfectly straightforward. You are past forty-three years of age; Esther Fleming is nineteen. You have thought yourself in love with her for the last two years. She has befooled you,—unintentionally, mind, I say no harm of the child, but befooled you, as every young girl must befool a blind, besotted man of middle age who puts himself in the idiotic position that you have done. It is high time that all this should end; and it *shall* end. I have decided so this evening.'

'Yes, Joan, yes,' he faltered meekly. 'Esther is to go away a little. I understand.'

'Esther is to go away for a year,' said Joan, utterly ignoring him and his remark too. 'Her friend, Miss Dashwood, will, she tells me, be ready to find her a situation; and it will do the girl good—brace up her energies, teach her not to sentimentalize—to be away for a certain appointed time from home, and thrown upon her own resources. After the year is over she shall come back if she chooses. My mother's house, and after her death mine, will always be open to Esther. If she finds that a life among strangers suits her, let her keep to it, in God's

name! If not, she shall return to Countisbury and carry out a plan of honest independence which I have often had upon my mind. Yes, the whole thing is settled.'

Miss Joan turned round, seized the poker, and gave one fearful stroke into the heart of the fire; then, with the blazing embers lighting up every line of his awe-stricken face, she leant over and confronted her unhappy kinsman full.

'David Engleheart!' she ejaculated, 'if you had the heart, if you had the common spirit of a man, you would speak now!'

'Speak, Joan?' he echoed, passively. 'I have got nothing to say. Perhaps 'tis all for the best that Esther should go away for a time.'

'And you think *that* kind of foolish subterfuge will avail you now? You think—she let fall the poker full upon his outstretched, slipped feet—that I am to be blinded any more by your convenient assumption of childish simplicity? No, Mr. Engleheart, no; I can assure you that from this night forth everything in this house is going to be placed upon an entirely different footing! You must declare yourself, or we part. I have looked after you like a child for fifteen years, put up with your ways and your whims and your tempers,—he wrung his hands in feeble deprecation—and, which was worse, have witnessed your infatuated hankering after a girl who might be your grandchild.'

'Grandchild? Oh lord, Joan, draw it milder, draw it milder! Grandchild? why, I am only forty-three, and Esther near upon nineteen. I couldn't well have married at five years old—you must allow that?'

'Your indecent jests do not for one moment turn me aside from the subject, sir, and are most especially ill-timed and brutal upon *your* lips!' And here hundreds of little spiteful bones, unknown to anatomists, seemed to be called into sudden action in the region of Miss Joan's neck as she dipped her head forward, after the manner of some ferocious bird, athwart her helpless prey. 'What I said, I repeat. I've

looked after you like a child, and pampered you, and slaved for you, for fifteen years; and now, after it all, I am not,—no, Mr. Engleheart, —I am *not* going to be trifled with any longer.

David sprang to his feet, with a curdling terror that Miss Engleheart was going to seat herself upon his knees, and pushed his ten fingers wildly up through his lanky hair.

'What, in God's name, do you mean, Joan? and what do you want? Trifled with you! great heavens! have I ever tried—have I ever wanted—to trifle with you in any way whatever? I—I? You must be dreaming, Joan.'

But he knew very well she was not; he knew well the old terror of two winters back was culminating in a tangible form, and his eyes glazed with hopeless and abject terror. What if she should take him in her arms, kiss him, affiance herself to him, marry him, for aught he knew—marry him this very night, standing there in his slippers!

'All that friendship can dictate, cousin Joan! I—I mean, you know, you've been very good and taken care of me and my clothes and everything—and I'm very grateful, I'm sure! Shake hands, please, and don't let's say any more about it. I—I—I—'

'You, you, you are a base, perjured, infamous man if you leave this room without declaring yourself, David Engleheart! Look me in the face like a man, if you dare, and tell me you don't know how we stand to each other! If you hadn't a heart of stone you'd speak now, for Esther's sake, you would. Monster!'

'For Esther's sake? Oh lord, Joan, say everything plain and out if you please. For Esther's sake! I'm—I'm—no, I don't see it! I'll be hanged if I do, and I never shall see it! For Esther's sake—'

'You should establish her a respectable home if, after the first year, she doesn't continue to like her life as a governess. My mother's great age, as you perfectly well know, makes her life a thing of utter uncertainty. Any day, without ill-

ness or warning, she might die; and then, I ask you, if indeed you have the capacity for reflection, to answer where would Esther Fleming's home be?'

'Why, here, of course. When poor Aunt Engleheart departs, as in the common course of nature 'tis but likely she, some day, must, you and I won't, in all human probability, die on the same day, Joan, eh?'

'And you think, you *think* that I should continue to live with you—no blood-relation, even—and my mother gone? Mr. Engleheart, your coarse jests have already taught me what you consider to be humour. You now insult me with your low immorality. I live with you unless my mother's presence sanctioned it? Oh!—'

Miss Engleheart planted herself well between David and the door; folded her arms across her breast, and began—one touch of love makes the whole sex kin—to cry; yes—horrible though it was to look upon—to shed positive tangible tears.

And then David Engleheart knew that his hour was come. He could have resisted much, under other circumstances; but Joan weeping, and standing with her back tight against the door, and demanding of him to marry her, was a combination to withstand which the powers heaven had bestowed on David were utterly insufficient.

'If you really wish, Joan—I mean if you think it possible anybody could be any happier by such an arrangement—and that you'd be good to Esther, you know—never hard or jealous of her any more—but give her a home here as long as she chooses to remain in it, why of course—of course—I'd be very happy. I mean, in time, you know, when I've got rather more used to the thought, and so on!'

It was not perhaps the response of a very impassioned lover, but Joan found no fault with it; and when Esther came in to tea, half an hour later, she found David seated at work at his writing-table as usual; Miss Joan vigorously casting up her clothing-club accounts at the further corner of the room.

Miss Engleheart had sense: fairer

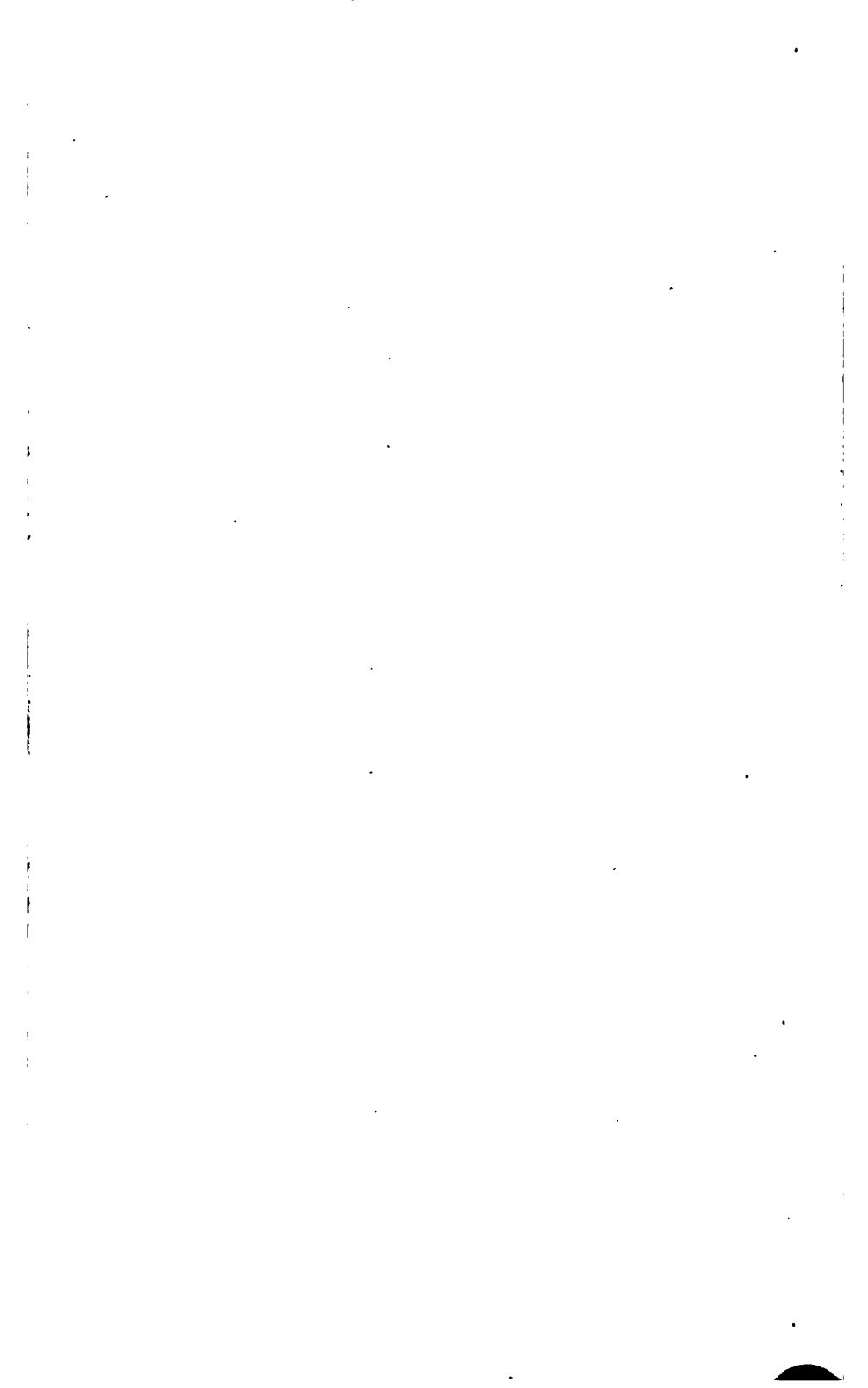


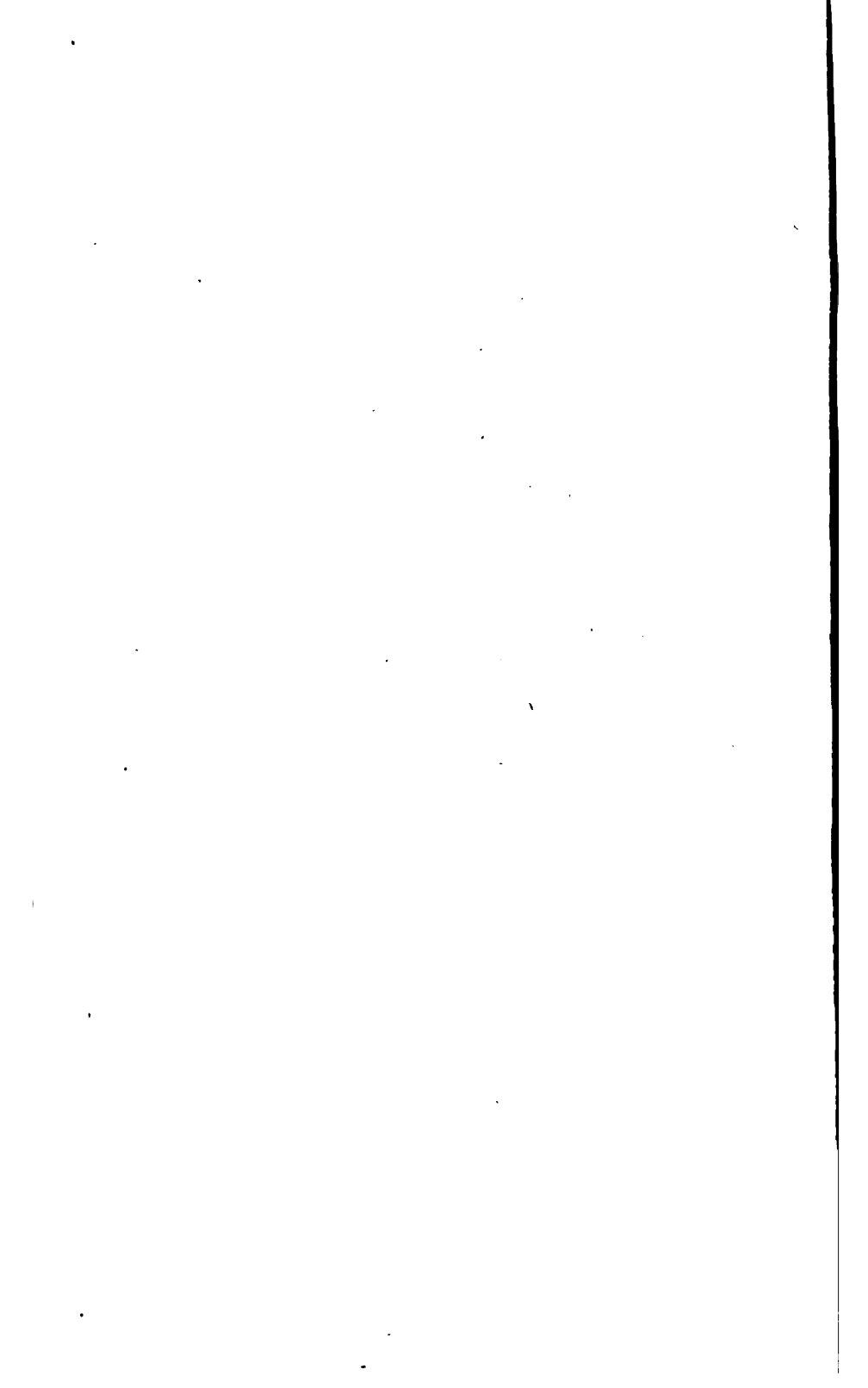


Drawn by M. Ellen Edwards.

MILLY'S SUCCESSES.

See "The Ordeal for Wives." Chapter XVIII.





and younger women might profit by her example. Having once got your fish upon the hook, let him rest awhile. When a man has promised to marry you, don't drive him to madness by demanding any work of supererogation at his hands.

CHAPTER XXXII.

MILLY'S SUCCESSES.

The twelvemonth that had passed in pain and monotony to Esther Fleming had been an eventful, an eminently successful one to the two Miss Dashwoods. As I am writing Esther's story, not theirs, I do not need, here at least, to enter upon the details of their successes. Let the facts tell their own story. At the time when Joan resolved that Esther should leave Countisbury, Jane had been engaged—really, openly, substantially engaged—to a man of birth and fortune, for the last three months; while Milly, poor little innocent, undesigning Milly, was already a married woman, with a fair settlement, a London house, and an undeniable position of her own.

But not with John Alexander for her husband. Millicent had just begun to decide that the home life of an English maiden, however pretty to read of in nice little high-church fictions, was not one which she cared to continue indefinitely; and that, sooner than go on like Jane, year after year, each filled with a series of domestic contentions and fruitless triumphs, she would even take John Alexander—lack of aspirates, lack of ancestors, ungainly person and all—for a husband. Millicent's sensible and not sentimental mind had, I say, just arrived at these conclusions, and she was beginning to give Mr. Smithett unlimited encouragement at every public place where she chanced to meet him, when another actor appeared on the scene, and in less than a fortnight her plastic affections were definitely and legitimately engaged.

There are men (heavy obtuse men, only thoroughly awake to the merits in themselves which nobody else discover) who are wonderfully easy

to win when an already half-snared prey serves as decoy-duck to the lure. Mr. Marmaduke Scott was one of these. He came to Bath, proposing to stay a fortnight; saw Millicent Dashwood's pretty little face every morning at the pump-room, saw her of an afternoon in the park, saw her everywhere, but still with John Alexander's form, John Alexander's *petits soins* attending her; and fell more foolishly in love with her than he would have done had she been thrice as pretty but with no John Alexander to arouse his, Marmaduke Scott's, vanity.

'Curse the fellow for a conceited cad! I could cut him out in a day, in an hour, if I would!' This was the insidious whisper with which the demon of self-love first prompted Mr. Scott on to his fall; aided, I will not deny, by many upturned timid glances of encouragement from the young lady herself; for Milly always made inquiries respecting the position of any stray men who appeared; and, even with poor Smithett coming on fast, held firm hold upon all the foregone conclusions of her little mercenary creed.

It did not take long for Mr. Scott to put his first vague aspiration into deeds. Milly saw at once the nature of the great inert mass of stupid humanity that was beginning to dog her steps; the exact point in which the strength of her own position lay. John Alexander must be covertly kept on in closest attendance; she must turn from John Alexander—a look of pain for him, of rapture for another, upon her face—whenever Scott approached; must make him believe himself to have cruelly, perfidiously, but irrevocably, replaced the first object of her girlish fancy in that young heart. And all this she did; and into the very pitfall designed for him did Marmaduke Scott plant his two big feet.

There was not likely to be much delay as regarded the Dashwood family. Jane and Millicent, between them, never allowed the lover to feel himself for a moment bored—that frightfully dangerous symptom for a lover to sustain before the wedding day; Mrs. Dashwood showed herself as much alive as the most

carnal-minded mother could have been to the rapid but inexpensive preparations attendant upon a bridal trousseau; the Colonel, with equal parental diligence, pushed the settlements forward, and took care to have them as ample and as tightly secured upon his daughter as possible. All went on admirably, even to the minor details of poor John Alexander still haunting Milly's steps—thus fanning up the blaze of gratified vanity to the last; and, almost before Mr. Scott's cumbrous machinery for thinking had enabled him to realize what he was about, he found himself handing Colonel Dashwood's youngest daughter into a travelling carriage, with lovely bridesmaids and idiotic groomsmen and weeping relations and faithful servants, looking at him in one confused group from the doorstep of Colonel Dashwood's house.

Now I am far from saying that to find oneself unexpectedly the owner of so attractive a creature as Millicent Dashwood is, just at first, a depressing circumstance in a man's life. Barring that one glimmering suspicion that he had been a fool, which did overcome him incidentally as he handed his bride into her travelling carriage, Mr. Scott was very well content with his new wife, and found his honeymoon in Paris, and Milly's smiling face and insatiable appreciation of new dresses, and their *solitude à deux* at the Opera, and their little dinners at the Trois Frères, very much indeed to his taste. But at the end of five or six weeks—perhaps it took about this time for Mr. Scott fairly to grapple with an idea—and as Milly's smile settled down into the natural moderate ratio of domestic cheerfulness, and both of them began insensibly to feel relieved when the *solitude à deux* at dinner or the Opera was broken by another person, then, I do say, it occurred to Mr. Marmaduke Scott's mind to ask himself why, in the name of heaven, he had tied himself to his Millicent? And the only satisfactory answer he could ever, even up to this day, find to the question was comprised in these five words: 'I have been an ass.'

He was not a man to be made at

all lastingly miserable by any earthly circumstance, as long as his two thousand a-year and his appetite remained to him. You remember the description of Haldor? 'Whatever turned up, Haldor was never in higher nor in lower spirits, never slept less nor more, on account of them, nor ate nor drank but according to his custom. Haldor was not a man of words—short in conversation: told his opinion bluntly, and was obtuse and hard.'

Not unlike him was Mr. Scott. 'Full of coarse strength, strong exercise, butcher's meat, and sound sleep,' there was little place left for sentiment in his composition; and whatever amount of affection it was in him to feel was already given away to his little daughter, the only child of a former marriage. He was not made at all miserable by discovering that he did not love Milly, nor she him; but he often repeated to himself the same formula as on his first discovery of the facts, to wit, 'I have been an ass,' and he also very resolutely determined that, having been an ass concerning Milly once, he would not be an ass concerning her for the future.

Scott had all the persistent clearness incident to a thoroughly shallow mind. When he once believed a thing, his belief never progressed nor developed; but it also never vacillated. The English constitution; the English church service; madeira with lobster; claret with salmon; white burgundy with venison; these were the great fundamental beliefs of Mr. Scott's mind: and to these was added, as Milly very shortly discovered, another: namely, an Englishman's supremacy over his own household.

During the first six weeks or so of her marriage, Mrs. Scott had indulged in very nice little dreams, indeed, respecting her own future life. This dear, good, heavy, old Marmy would be so easily managed! Give him his dinner and his wine and Marmy wouldn't care about her amusing herself in her own innocent way. But on the very first occasion when she strove to take the reins—Scott was engaged to a men's dinner, and she persistently proposed dining

with her dear friend, the Baroness Z—, and going to the Opera without him—such a sample of Marmy's docile nature was called forth as made her sensible that the one great item freedom had not been included in the otherwise successful bargain of her marriage.

'You've not been well brought up, Millicent,'—kind friends had managed to whisper various Dashwood anecdotes to Scott since his marriage,—'and you and your sister have gone on a cursed deal too fast for your reputation already. But you're my wife now, and by G—! if you want to go to operas and balls by yourself, you may, but you won't live with me, too.'

Mr. Scott made this kindly speech quite in his accustomed tone, and with his great white face as unmoved as ever; and then he went off, quietly, to his own amusement, and Milly cried till she was sick, as she looked at the lovely white silk and pearls in which she had meant to appear, and thought of the ruthless monster to whom she was tied, and would be tied, while she lived.

If Jane had been Scott's wife, she would have openly rebelled; no doubt whatever of that; have rebelled and been defeated, and rebelled and conquered, and then have been defeated again, and then, and then—have ended, probably, as so many a generous, impassioned, faulty nature does, and when phlegmatic, suspicious, commonplace drives it to despair. But Millicent was sure to make the very best, in a worldly sense, of every position in which she found herself placed. Her husband was tyrannical, jealous, obstinate. Very well. Through his tyranny, his jealousy, his obstinacy, must she manage him: a different life, certainly, to the easy one which she had planned in those early days when she believed Marmy to be a negative not a positive fool; but an enviable fortunate life still; with position; with money;—a life very far better to that which, as the plainest of Colonel Dashwood's penniless daughters, she had ever dared to hope for.

And so, the first blind six weeks over, Mr. and Mrs. Scott understood

each other; and they returned to London, and took a pretty little house as near the abodes of real greatness as possible, and furnished this house, and gathered a circle of acquaintances around them, and got on well together.

The fundamental principle of 'getting on' between married persons living in the world may be broadly classified under two heads: scientific, covert warfare; profound indifference. The relations between the Scotts partook of both these characters; and the result was a more than usual amount of getting on. Their friends declared it was quite a pleasure to look at these two young people, they seemed so evidently to understand each other's characters, and to live in such thorough harmony and accord.

What did the world know, or care, that Mr. Marmaduke Scott's daily thought was, 'I don't love her, I was an ass to marry her, and I distrust her to the very core. But she has got my honour in her hands, and so long as we live together I'll watch her, and keep her straight, whether she wills it or no, by my watching.' The wife: 'Marmaduke is a bore, a suspicious, horrible, stupid, jealous wretch; but I did well for myself in marrying him, and I mean to uphold my own position as his wife.'

The world saw that Mr. Scott attended his wife sedulously to her balls and operas; that Mrs. Scott freely accorded to him the liberty which young wives occasionally have the folly to feel jealous about; and the world pronounced them a happy and well-assorted couple.

As you may imagine, Millicent was not a person to be especially cognizant of the existence of her own family, now that she had fairly outstripped them in money and social position; and letters descriptive of Colonel Dashwood's desire to look up old London friends, and of Mrs. Dashwood's to 'sit' for a time at the feet of the momentary Gamaliel of spiritualism, called forth no other answer from the lamb newly-severed from the flock than a kindly offer to look out for lodgings for Papa and Mamma if they should

come to town. But as regarded Jane it was different. Millicent could not love: nature not having given her the *de quoi* through which alone that painful and ill-paying process can be conducted: but she was human, and Jane had been the only creature who had loved her since she was born, and Jane was handsome and would attract people about the house, and Jane would listen and take counsel with her respecting the furniture and the servants and the dresses and the dinner parties which were already the real hearty interests of Millicent's life. Jane would be useful: Jane's companionship would be grateful to her: and so, after a good deal of contention with dear Marmy, and when circumstances, per force, made him abstain from contradicting his wife, Miss Dashwood was invited to come and take up her abode with the newly-married pair.

She came; and, as I have told you, she conquered. At the time when Esther resolved to follow Joan's advice and come to London, Jane Dashwood had been for more than two months the promised wife of Lord Feltham.

'Don't expect romance, please,' she wrote to Esther, when arrangements had finally been made for the latter coming to London. 'Don't expect romance, and don't think I am a bit changed from what I was. I met Arthur Peel last night (my *fiancé* has rejoined his regiment at Corfu, you know) and talked to him—well, for half the evening. Esther, you may remember it is a little peculiarity incidental to Arthur Peel and myself to do so whenever we meet, and he assured me that Miss Lynes will have fifty thousand pounds upon her marriage day, and I told him that Lord Feltham has at least three thousand a year, besides his landed property. Don't the wicked flourish? and won't I be glad to have you to come and stay with me when I am married?'

'Oh Esther, Esther! I look out from my window upon this London street, and I see occasionally a dark unhappy figure stealing wearily through the rain and fog, and I don't know in my heart by how

much, if by any, I am better than one of these; and at this moment I almost wish, yes, I would to God I had the courage, as other wretches have, to walk away through the dark down to the river and throw myself in there and be at rest!

'Don't write me any answer. Spare congratulations till we meet.'

CHAPTER XXXIII.

AN ENFANT TERRIBLE.

I have mentioned that Mr. Marmaduke Scott had been already married and was the possessor of one little daughter. This child was between four and five years of age at the time of his second marriage; and, before she and her step-mother had lived under the same roof for a fortnight, Millicent was sensible how sharp a thorn in the flesh a step-child—a step-child of only four years old, was likely to prove.

Dogged in most things, there was one point respecting which Mr. Marmaduke Scott showed positively abnormal doggedness; namely, in his determination that his daughter should never be brought up anywhere save in his own house. He had neglected the child pretty consistently ever since her mother's death; leaving her with servants of all nations, and of whom he knew nothing, often for weeks, sometimes for months, together, when he was absent on his continental rambles. But to his one pre-gone conclusion he had always remained firm: she should be brought up with him.

Natty, poor little wretch, might, with great advantage to herself, have been left with some of her father's relations in England, or her mother's in France, or at any decent school in either; but Mr. Scott was not to be argued with in the matter. The child should not be put away from him. He had no belief in relations; he held girls' schools to be immoral. Natty should travel with him: and travel with him Natty did; deriving, as aforesaid, her rudimentary ideas of right and wrong and the world in general from whatever French *bonne*, Swiss governess, or cosmopolitan courier it might please Providence to place her under.

'She is a little monster,' said her stepmother, in a moment of free expansion, to Jane Dashwood, when she was first summing up the advantages and disadvantages of having married Marmy to her sister; 'a precocious, prying, pert, little, hardened monster; but she must be taught, if only to keep her so many hours a day out of my way, and a nursery governess won't cost more than a nurse—especially if I make it part of the bargain that she shall do my plain sewing as well as the child's. The bore will be having such a creature at all. A young woman, perhaps, who will imagine herself a lady, and upset the servants by making them wait on her. Oh, if the little scheme of education was to be carried out by me alone, shouldn't dear Miss Natty be at a good strict school before next Monday morning.'

However, the scheme of education had not to be carried out by Mrs. Scott at all, and Natty growing day by day more unmanageable to the household at large, and oppressive to her stepmother in particular, a nursery governess had grown to be looked upon as a crying and urgent necessity, when Esther Fleming's announcement of her wish to meet with such an engagement arrived. Milly, falling back upon one of the pious phrases of her childhood, clasped her little plump hands together, and called it a special and obvious answer to her prayers on Natty's behalf; Natty, herself, expressed a vigorous intention to hate, oppress, and generally rebel against Miss Fleming from the first moment of her arrival; Mr. Scott inquired if the woman was a fright that Millicent was so doosed anxious to get hold of her? Jane Dashwood at once wrote off a kind letter, the concluding words of which I have shown you, requesting Esther to undertake the training of Natty's early years. And Esther undertook it. She felt as though it mattered little to her into whose service or into what service she entered. To be the companion, as in her early governess dreams she had hoped, of a refined and educated woman, who would work with her, and through her, for one common good, her chil-

dren; or the hired dependant, half servant half confidant, of one so essentially little-minded as Millicent. All she wanted was work; work to which she must hourly attend; into which, however distasteful, she would conscientiously strive to throw all her strength. Work, and to be in the great city that held Paul!

So she made no demur at any of the small mean conditions which Millicent forced Jane to set forth in her offer. She was obdurate when Miss Joan would have made her rebel against repairing two wardrobes, and sitting up after parties (to save poor Watson), and coming to sing when required in the drawing-room, and, ordinarily, taking all her meals with Natty, 'who is never to be a moment out of dear Esther's sight,' all for the modest income of twenty-five pounds a-year.

To feel small slights or injustices from indifferent people the heart must be unoccupied, the nerves acutely sensitive—hence the cause, perhaps, why governesses, as a body, are so morbidly alive to the necessary evils of their position. To Esther, full of life and the passion of life, her heart charged to overflowing with one only too absorbing interest, her nerves as little irritable as youth and health could make them, it was simply a matter of indifference what were Mrs. Scott's demands, or how much or how little of the society of her patrons she would have. She would rather have undertaken those menial duties and have received that pitiful twenty-five pounds a-year, than have entered the best house, have received the highest wages in London. And why? The Scotts knew Paul. Through Jane Dashwood's agency she would be certain to meet him, feel the clasp of his hand, look into his face once more.

Does any human being deserve pity who possesses youth and the capacity for loving and being miserable?

I think not. I think we waste our sympathy grievously upon all heroes and heroines of romance. When men and women need pity is—when they have ceased to be able either to love or to suffer!

MY CADET LIFE AT WOOLWICH.



THE LODGE GATE.

THE hearty 'God bless you, my boy!' of my father was still ringing in my ears, my mother's kiss still warm upon my cheek, as the puffing locomotive dragged our heavy train out of the station, on its way to the great metropolis. I was the only tenant of the compartment, and my thoughts soon turned from those I had left behind, to the new stage upon which I was about to become an actor.

Was I really on my way to join the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich? Had I indeed passed the dreaded competitive examination at Chelsea? and only a short time ago parted from my friends in Dr. Cramwell's establishment at Blackheath? It all seemed a dream—so quickly over! But I drew forth a large official letter from my pocket, which soon showed me that it was indeed a reality:

On Her Majesty's Service.

GENTLEMAN CADET EDWARD WHITE,

THE RECTORY,

POORPAY,

YORKSHIRE.

It looked well—military rather—and had come from some great general in London, who had signed himself 'my obedient servant,' and yet had ordered me to report myself at the Cadet Barracks at Woolwich, by a certain day. I thought it kind of him to be so humble and polite.

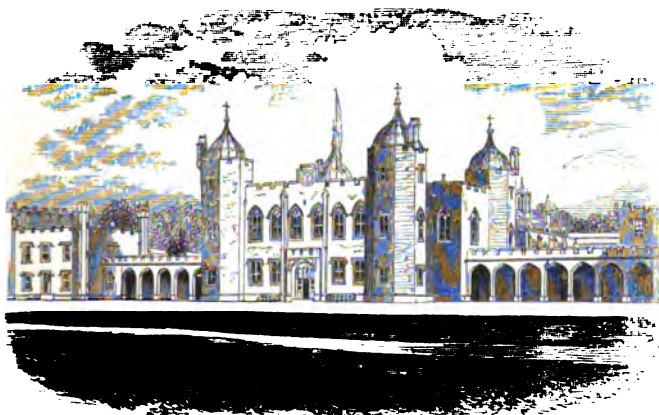
How should I like the army? Cadet Barracks sounded soldierlike, though it did not convey to my mind any great idea of comfort. I should see my friend Bobby Jones: in fact I had already received a letter from him, saying he would do all he could to have me placed in the same room with himself. He had also warned me that I was arriving at rather a critical period: the old nomination epoch had passed away only a short time before, and there still remained many cadets who had entered under its auspices, and who would not be inclined to look with any great favour upon us, who joined under the new and open system of competitive examination.

They had fagged for their seniors in days gone by, and now that they had

reached the top of the tree and were expecting their turn, all fagging was done away with, and our greater age gave a kind of equality to us all. I was sorry for them, but it could not be helped.

Arrived at the London Bridge station as the evening was closing in, what a number of young men I met! all with portmanteaus nearly identical: for the regulations which I had received from the Horse Guards, prior to my departure from home, were very strict concerning their breadth, depth, and length. I was also required to bring with me, as part of my kit, several articles of linen and underclothing, the arrangement and marking of which had given my poor mother no end of trouble; we could not understand the necessity of some of them: four nightcaps, for instance; but I afterwards ascertained they came in very useful for culinary purposes.

How I peered into the darkness, trying to make out what kind of a place I was going to, as the cabman drove me through some large iron gates, past a lodge, up a gravel road. As we drew up, a tall artillery sergeant opened the door, and politely showed me into a room containing several of my travelling companions. Another sergeant inquired my name, and suggested that I was 'just joining.' To which I meekly replied: 'Edward



ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY, WOOLWICH.

White.' 'Mr. White, No. 30.' 'This way, sir,' said a servant in smart livery, as he shouldered my portmanteau and strode out of the room, leading me to an adjoining building, which we entered by a small, yet strong-looking door, the large padlock upon which did not please me. We then went up a flight of stairs, and I found myself in my barrack-room.

The sight of its comforts oppressed me, my spirits fell to zero. It was a high room, about sixteen feet square, with one window protected by stout iron bars; its furniture consisted of a strong wooden table in the centre, with four chairs of the same material, an iron turn-up bed in each of the four corners, a flap table at the window, which supported four pewter basins, and underneath it were two large tin cans containing water. There was also a press with four small cupboards, and a copper coalscuttle. The walls were papered with whitewash, and the carpet was not of the finest sand. This cheerful apartment was evidently intended for four occupants, and was lighted by gas.

I asked my guide whether I could not have a better room. He said, 'Oh no, sir; only the first-class gents has rooms to themselves; the others are all like this, and much better too than what the last-joined used to have in the Towers, sir.' I did not care about that, so I took a chair (how hard it was, not even soft deal) and meditated gloomily over my future prospects. I certainly did not like my first impressions of the place, it looked so like a

workhouse, everything so scrupulously clean, and yet so grim! so comfortless! There was a piece of cardboard nailed over the top of the cupboard, upon which was written:

No. 1. Mr. MELVILLE.
No. 3. Mr. JONES.

No. 2. Mr. CRASTIE.
No. 4. Mr. WHITE.

So I was No. 4. No. 3 must be Bobby; that was a comfort any way. I wondered what the other two were like. I heard constant arrivals, and at last the door opened, and Bobby stood before me. Was I not glad to see him just? I *did* give him a welcome. I liked him better than I had ever done before; we talked over our mutual acquaintances, but soon reverted to my former train of thought. 'This is a gloomy look-out, Bobby.' 'That it is,' replied he. 'When my reverend uncle the canon came to see me here one day, he said his union at home was much better got up; but it's nothing when you are used to it; besides, Melville, the head of our room, is a regular brick and a perfect gentleman; you are sure to like him. I cannot say as much for Crastie, he is rather a snob, no one seems to know anything about him, or where he comes from, or who his friends are; the story is, that some great swell procured his nomination for him, in return for some votes which his father (supposed to be an attorney) had at his command. He was one of the last of the nominees, a lucky thing for him! he could certainly not have passed at a competitive—. Hush! here is some one coming.' Two young men now entered the room. 'How do Jones?' 'How do?' 'All right, how are you?' 'Allow me to introduce a last-joined, a friend of mine, Mr. White.' They expressed themselves happy at making my acquaintance, and I soon recognized Melville, a fine soldierlike looking young man, with a frank open bearing and a prepossessing countenance; I felt I should like him; but the other did not take my fancy; perhaps Bobby's description had rather prejudiced me against him. Melville put many questions, asking me particularly who my father was; for the nominees had evidently an idea that the competitive system would make an opening for many who were not gentlemen, forgetting the almost obligatory preparation at an expensive cramming school for some time beforehand, and the cost of the education at Woolwich: at least 180*l.* a-year for the sons of civilians.

I had known Melville's brother at Rugby, and was becoming more at home with him, when the sound of many footsteps and the clanging of swords startled me. All rose and stood opposite their respective beds, the door was thrown open with a bang, and in walked a cadet, accompanied by an officer of artillery; our names were called over, during which the latter's sharp eye made an examination of each of us, resting rather longer upon me as I was a new comer. This ceremony, which they designate by the term 'Roll call,' being concluded, my three companions took what they called their 'Josbages,' large canvas receptacles, out of which tumbled boots, uniforms, caps, etc., etc. Crastie took off his coat, and after a long hunt accused some unknown individual of bagging his Banian. 'What's that?' I whispered to Bobby. 'Why, a regimental shooter, to be sure.' None the wiser for this lucid explanation, I wondered what kind of weapon it could be, when Crastie produced a grey-looking rough shooting coat, in which he proceeded to array himself, adding nothing to his personal appearance, in my opinion, however much it might conduce to his comfort. The others having followed his example, we began to discuss the various changes the new half year had produced, and the promotion that had taken place.

I found Melville had only just been made a corporal, and that we were all under the command of a cadet who was called the responsible under officer, and who ruled supreme in the absence of any of the officers. Immediately under him were three others called sub-divisional under officers, who each had charge of a division, and again, under their com-

mand, came the different corporals. I also learnt that these corporals had special privileges above the other cadets, they were allowed a shilling a week more pocket money (coming of course out of their fathers' purses), they could return from leave on Saturday or Sunday an hour later than the others, and they were not obliged to show a written invitation before they obtained their leave. These slight advantages seemed scarcely to compensate for all their trouble in writing reports, superintending the cadets both in and out of study, besides the great responsibility of their position.

Our conversation, however, was brought to a sudden close by the extinction of the gas, leaving us in total darkness; it was the half hour, and the sergeant had turned it off at the main; we ought to have been undressing instead of talking. As soon as I was undressed, and had knelt down and asked for my Heavenly Father's blessing and protection, not forgetting the dear ones at home, I jumped into bed. How narrow it was! How hard and coarse the sheets! the pillow seemed stuffed with bricks! and the covering was very scanty; but I was too tired to find overmuch fault, and soon fell fast asleep.

My dreams were full of military adventures: I was an officer fighting my country's battles, an eager candidate for the Victoria cross. The enemy were in front of us, we were thirsting for glory and just about to rush on the foe as the trumpet sounded the charge, when my eyes opened and the blast of a bugle under my window brought my senses back from dream-land. I sat up in my bed and seized my watch, it was just six o'clock; but the other three slept on; I wondered what the call meant, but was soon relieved by our servant, an old gunner (who took care of sixteen of us), announcing that 'Réveillé' had sounded, and that it was time to get up. Malville quickly disappeared down stairs, with a towel, followed by the others, to take advantage of the capital baths with which we were provided.

Such a rummaging of Joebags, and stretching out of crumpled uniforms! such brushing and cleaning! and shortly three smart soldiers were ready for parade; we had just finished our toilet, when another trumpet blast resounded through the building—'warning' they called it—and the voice of the corporal on duty came up from the bottom of the stairs, 'Turn out, turn out.'

What a hurry scurry at the last moment! 'Where's my stock?' from one. 'There's a button off my glove,' says a second. 'Where's my cap?' from a third; and we all bustled pell-mell down stairs just in time, as the clock struck seven, to fall in. The last-joined, being in plain clothes, remained in rear; and as soon as the corporal had inspected us, to see that our clothes were clean, and properly put on, we were marched off to join the other divisions in the quadrangle opposite the dining hall.

Here the officer came and threw us into line, we poor raw recruits, crowding in a heap in rear of the others, and after opening the ranks, looking carefully at each one, sent us piecemeal into the hall for breakfast. He was very sharp and strict, and kept us in capital order. There was no moving or talking when he was on parade, he would be sure to catch us and give us drill. The hall presented a very imposing appearance, surrounded by banners, mottoes, men in armour, and swords of bygone governors. Our accoutrements and rifles lined the sides, giving it a martial appearance, which was enhanced by the spirited conflicts in stained glass which each window represented. Tables to hold ten, with a corporal at the top, filled the hall, and we set to work on cold meat, bread and butter, and tea or coffee, as soon as we received the command from the officer on duty. When all had finished, the chaplain read prayers, and we were dismissed for a short time till the trumpet again sounded the warning to summon us to another parade, for study, at eight o'clock. The last-joined were all taken into the same room to form the fifth or last class. There were five classes, and we could advance one each term; so that our cadet life occupied two and a half years, unless we were kept two terms in the

same class for idleness or bad conduct. Our study was a large octagon-shaped room, with a professor at one end, and his assistant at the other. The military subjects, which we liked best, were taught us by officers of artillery or engineers; the others by civilians.

Order was preserved by a corporal, detailed each week for that duty, who would not allow us to speak a word, or move from our seats on any account. Corporals could punish us whenever they liked by giving us extra drill, or by placing us in arrest for twenty-four hours, during which time we were bound upon honour not to leave our rooms except for parade or some other duty, and we were obliged to join the two extra drills, one early in the morning, before the others had risen from their beds, the other in the afternoon, during recreation time. The culprits were marched up and down the parade for half an hour with old cutlasses, or carbines, in their hands; about as pleasing though not so useful an employment as the treadmill.

At a quarter to eleven study was over, and out I ran, intending to take a walk and see the place; but I was told our presence was requested immediately at another parade for drill. I did not expect the nap on our coats would last long with so much brushing for all these parades. As this was our first day, we were led off to the tailor, who tried on our uniforms; this took a long time with some, but mine fitted almost at once. Oh, the agony of the regimental stock! it seemed to saw your head off, you could only move your eyes, and felt divided, like old *Cæsar's* Gaul, into three parts, head, stock, and body. I was obliged to lift the eatables well up as the Neapolitans do their macaroni, bending down to meet them was impossible; I had great difficulty in seeing my plate, so I did not much enjoy my dinner of roast beef and beer at one o'clock, which was preceded by the usual parading and inspecting. At two another parade, and study till four, when we had nothing more till six; so I determined to give the inhabitants of Woolwich a treat, and show them my new uniform, which was not, in my opinion, unbecoming. I brushed my hair as smart as could be, cocked my cap gingerly over my right ear, and thought it better to go by myself, as I should then be the centre of attraction.

I sauntered down the Common, swaggered through the town, up and down the principal streets, such as they were, and was somewhat surprised at the rude boys, wherever I went, saluting me with 'Miau! Miau! here's a new cat. Puss, Puss!' The same greeting followed me all over the place, much to my discomfiture and perplexity. On my return, Bobby told me that in former days the cadets used to wear curious little swallow-tailed coats, hence the nickname, from the supposed resemblance to the domestic mouser, and it had been in vogue at Woolwich from time immemorial.

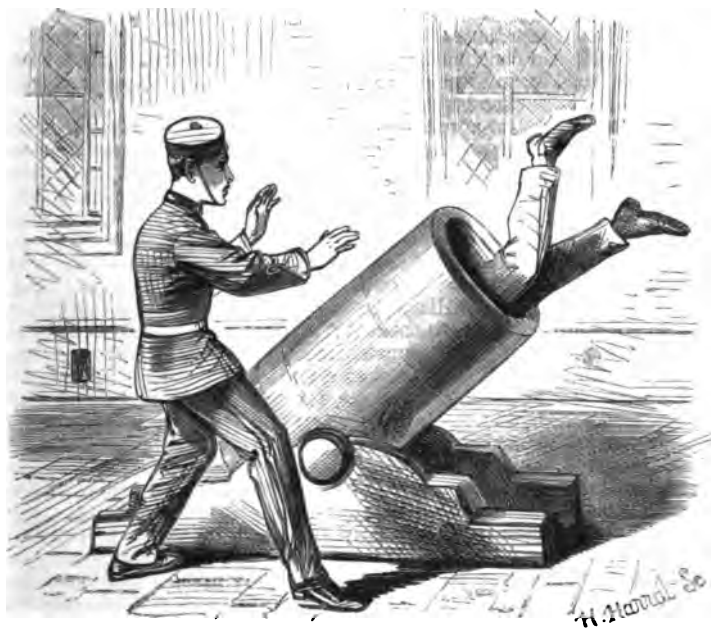
We paraded again for study at six, this lasted till eight, when I thought our labours must be over for the day; but there was yet another parade for tea, and afterwards we had to show ourselves in our rooms, or in the library, whenever a bell rang, till roll-call. The object of these 'checks' as they were called, being to prevent our leaving the barracks at night.

What pleasure it gave me, after tea, to be able to take off my stock and tight-fighting coat, and array myself in my *Banian*! My neck was very sore, and there was a red mark all round where the stock had nearly rubbed the skin off.

I began to like Melville, though he was rather haughty and condescending to me; but I discovered, afterwards, that this was only proper behaviour on the part of a corporal when talking to a last-joined. We had nice little chats of an evening going to bed; and as he had been for two years a cadet under the old system (he had lost a term through idleness), his stories of the past used to interest and amuse us. 'Ah, Mr. Lastjoined!' said he, 'your first day was an easy one compared to what it used to be when I joined; all those who had been more than three terms at the shop (I supposed he meant the R. M. A.) were old cadets, and therefore privileged to order any of the younger ones about, to do entirely as they liked,

borrow the property of others, and make themselves as disagreeable as they pleased.

'On my first entering the lodge gate, I was met by a posse of these gentlemen: one asked my name, another where I came from, and a third knocked my new hat over my eyes because he said "I looked cool." Fortunately further attentions were spared me by a new comer, and I escaped. The head of my room told me my principal business was to wait upon him, brush and mend his clothes, and make myself generally useful; for I found the other two young cadets were favourites of his, whom he had applied for: one being a personal friend, and the other a particularly clever fellow, engaged to coach him in mathematics. I remember the first morning, on coming out after breakfast, being struck with astonishment at seeing a pair of legs sticking out of the large mortar opposite the dining hall, the



owner evidently occupying the bore of that weapon and making frantic efforts to extricate himself from his uncomfortable position. He was with difficulty released—he was a wretched last-joined, still in plain clothes, who had ventured to appear on parade in a cap with anchor buttons, instead of the more gentlemanly chimney-pot.

Besides my regular duties, I had to fag out at cricket, and never see an innings; and often for an hour or so, to work the treadle of one of the lathes, as my master was fond of turning, and we had no steam power then, as we have now. Picking up ninepins was another pursuit I took no delight in; and conveying cooked chicken, jellies, and other luxuries in my coat pockets for my master when under arrest, was anything but a pleasant employment. My greatest difficulty was in procuring fresh eggs for tea (which in those days we partook of in our rooms), no easy task when you have neither money nor credit, yet I generally managed it; cooking them afterwards in a nightcap tied to a long string, and lowered for three minutes into the copper of boiling water with which we made our tea. Woe me if the eggs were boiled too hard, or found to contain young chickens.

'My neckties and other superfluities were bartered away to a wandering vendor of fish, for stale crabs, pickled mackerel, shrimps, or lobsters. My master being a bit of a gourmand, was never satisfied with the plain bread and butter which was all that we were allowed; so, when every supply was exhausted, I used to pay a sly visit of a morning to the general store (where parcels and goods were deposited when they arrived) to try and discover whether any kind parent had sent a hamper of good things to their affectionate son; and when visiting other rooms, I always kept one eye open, looking out for straws lying about, evident tokens of recent unpacking. Was I successful in any discovery, I boldly entered the happy room at tea-time, with an empty plate, and my master's compliments, and would they kindly give him something? But it was a very different affair when we received a hamper from any sympathizing relative. How carefully we brought it over to our room, when few were about, hiding it away out of sight, and allowing only a very little to remain on our table at a time, so as not to rouse the expectations of any casual visitor!'

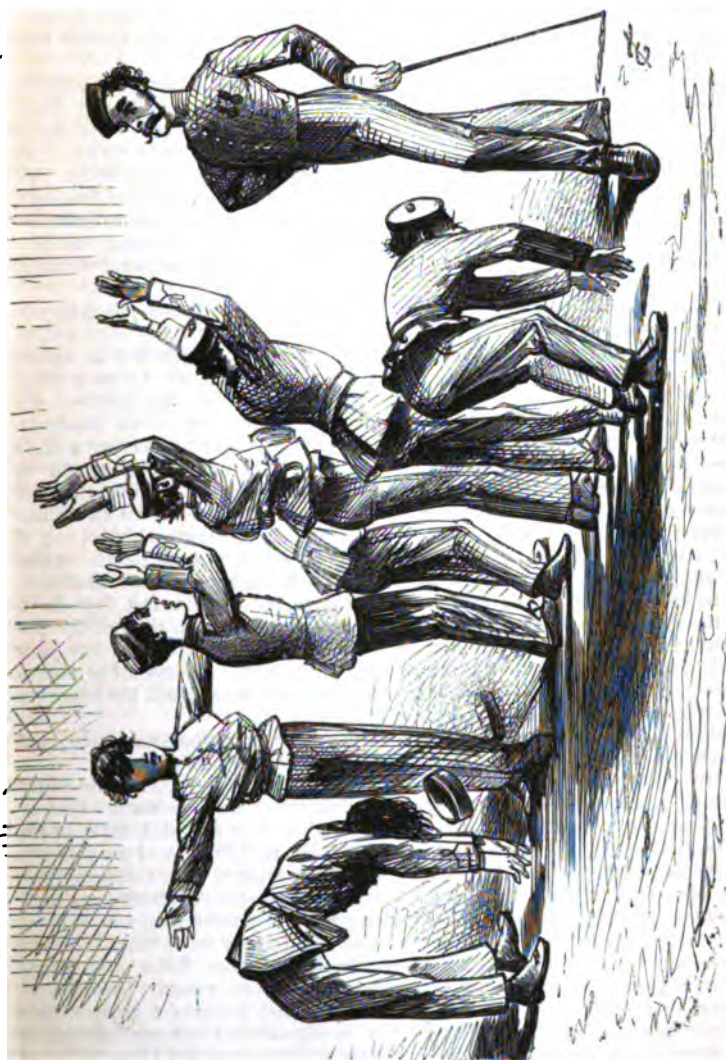
When Melville had concluded his experiences, I felt thankful my lot was so different, turned in, and was soon asleep between the sand-paper sheets; they did not seem quite so bad the second night.

Next morning we last-joined were introduced to a new functionary of stern and sober mien, a sergeant of artillery, who was to be our drill-instructor. He was evidently a Scotchman, and always prefixed his orders, or remarks with 'Lastejined.' He first placed us in two ranks, a little apart from one another, and then gave us a lecture on setting up drill. How our chests were to be expanded, and the body leaning a little forward, standing well upon the ball of the foot, with our hands extended, our little fingers touching the red seam of our trousers, heads well up, eyes firmly fixed in front, and so on. His style was too much for me, I began to laugh; but a voice behind soon sobered me, 'You will turn out to drill to-morrow morning, Mr. White, for unsteadiness in the ranks;' it came from the officer on duty. This sentence had a good effect upon us all, and the sergeant having finished his harangue, set to work to try and reduce our round shoulders, and make us hold up our heads. First we were to move our arms round and round like windmills; then to place both of our fists under our chins and jerk our arms backwards, as if to try and put them out of joint; then stretch over without bending our knees till we touched our toes with the tips of our gloves, causing our tunics to creep up under our arms, and buttons to fly, and seams to crack, in every direction. At last we all looked as if we were going to break a blood-vessel, or have a fit of apoplexy, so our instructor had pity upon us, and gave the order to 'stand at ease.' It seemed to me a most uneasy attitude, one foot behind the other, and our hands clasped in front, as if we were all struck with pensive thoughts at something he had said to us.

I made use of this opportunity to scan the parade, and see what was going on. I saw Bobby and his batch engaged with rifle carbines, firing deadly volleys at imaginary foes with imaginary bullets.

An older batch still, were at gun drill, running about with heavy masses of metal as if they were nothing at all, making a pretence of firing now and then and at last pulling the carriages to pieces, and sitting down exhausted upon the bits as they lay scattered in every direction; it looked hard work. Again, close to us were several girded with officers' swords, learning their saluting drill. I heard the word of command, 'Draw!' and their drill-sergeant's touching appeal, 'Now, really, gentlemen, this won't do; many of you moved your hands, and others actually grasped the hilt of the sword. When I say "Draw!" don't draw, but wait for the last sound of the word "*Swords!*"'

My ideas became suddenly more personal on hearing the command 'Lastejined, sherne!' We guessed he meant attention. We all jumped up, poked out our chins, stretched down our fingers, and glared uncomfortably at our instructor over the tops of our stocks. Again we strained and



MY FIRST DRILL.

twisted our muscles in every way: and the exertion was becoming rather too much for me, when the trumpet sounded, and we received the welcome command—'Lastejined, tortherright—face; break off!'

Our officers were very particular as to the length of our hair; they had a great objection to flowing locks. Every day a modern Figaro visited our barrack-rooms to ask whether he could do anything for us; and we were obliged to keep our hair cropped so short that it made even Crastie say, 'He thought it dangerous to scratch his head.'

As soon as Melville returned, I told him how hardly I had been treated, having to get up to drill next morning merely for just smiling a little. And who could help it when the sergeant spoke in that way? 'Oh, that's nothing!' said he. 'Some time ago there was a disturbance going on in one of the studies just over the Governor's office, and on hearing the row he sent for the corporal in charge of the room, who was a universal favourite with us all, to ask him what was the matter? He placed an unfortunate wight in arrest before he went to the Governor, so that he could tell him he had exercised proper authority; and down he went to the much-dreaded office.'

'His chief was in a great rage. The noise had evidently put him out when he was busy writing important official letters; and the corporal, to soften him down, said, that he had placed the three ringleaders in arrest, and had done all he could to preserve order. On his return, he gave us an account of his interview, and added that the Governor had ordered the three names to be sent to him at once. Two volunteers would therefore be required. They were soon forthcoming, but instead of receiving a day's arrest, as they expected, they were each placed in solitary confinement on bread and water for twenty-four hours, and a week's arrest in addition. All solitary confinement is done away with now. There used to be two kinds of cells: one whitewashed, with a small aperture, through which a ray of light streamed; the other, for more serious offenders was all black—walls, ceiling, and floor—no window at all: in fact, darkness, total darkness, reigned supreme. Their size was the same, about five feet by eight. Each cell was provided with a deal table, upon which a wooden pillow was nailed; and the only thing you were allowed to take in with you was your cloak; and in very cold weather a blanket was added. A sergeant appeared three times in the course of the day with bread and water, and the chaplain paid you a short visit in the morning.'

'Well, Melville, I am glad these torture-rooms are done away with; but what punishment have the authorities substituted in their place?'

'Oh! they give us arrest. And if in one half-year all your arrests added together make up thirty days, you are rusticated for one term—that is, sent home to your friends; and on your return you are still kept in the same class, thus delaying your commission six months. And very likely, in after days, when you are expecting your promotion to your company, you may have two, or even three more years to serve as a subaltern, in consequence of your rustication. It is a very serious punishment; and yet I have known it to be the making of some men: they have been idle and careless in their own term, and when this disgrace has fallen upon them they have been sobered, and brought to pause and reflect. After their return they work hard, and having fallen, it may be, into a more stupid class, they keep near the top of it, and finally obtain their commission in the Royal Engineers, which they would never have done had they remained in their own term. There are often, however, some at the top of the list at the final examination, who choose the Artillery in preference to the Engineers. They like working with men and horses, and have a horror of the confinement of an office.'

In the afternoon Bobby took me round the various amusements which were provided for the employment of our leisure hours: these were two large enclosed racquet-courts and a bowling alley; a splendid fencing-hall, fitted up likewise with all kinds of ropes, poles, ladders, swings, &c., for

gymnastic exercises; also two cricket-grounds; and a workshop well supplied with tools, including wood and metal lathes, worked by a small steam-engine. We had besides a lending-library and a reading-room, with most of the daily papers, and the several magazines and periodicals of the day.

I certainly did not enjoy rising so early the following morning to join the extra drill squad. Marching up and down for half an hour was wearisome work; and I made up my mind to be more careful for the future.

Saturday came at last, and with it a half-holiday; and all who had friends in London or its vicinity obtained leave to visit them till Sunday night. Nearly all went away; a few remained whose leave had been stopped for misconduct, or who had no friends to receive them. From what I afterwards learnt, I suspected many paid their friends but a short visit. One was actually placed in arrest by the officer on duty for bringing up an invitation with the ink wet, evidently written by himself.

After the first week I began to feel much more at home; my regimentals became actually comfortable. I had learnt how to put on my accoutrements, and understood the ins and outs of the place.

Our Governor was a very great man; he reigned supreme, and was accountable for our welfare to the Commander-in-Chief alone. Under him was a Lieutenant-Governor, the inspector also of studies, who seemed to have plenty of work to do, and had an assistant-inspector to help him. Our three companies were each commanded by a captain, who had subalterns to act as orderly officers. We were a very compact community, all divided into different sets; some were fast, and always getting into scrapes; others formed a society who despised cards and spirits, but clung fondly to beer and tobacco; again, there were others steadier still, who voluntarily attended the chaplain's Bible-class; in fact, whatever tastes we possessed, we were sure to find others of a similar way of thinking.

Fashion had great influence over us. For a long time eye-glasses were all the go. Not a cadet was to be seen without one. Those who were not short-sighted had theirs made of common glass; and the contortions of countenance caused by the attempted retention of the glass in the eye were fearful! After a time most of them were broken, and some two or three purchased snuff-boxes of curious make and shape. Then every one must have a box for himself—the Irish and Scotch preferring the stronger kinds, the English contenting themselves with the less pungent, though more highly scented varieties. The passing round of these boxes prevailed much during study, and the coughing and sneezing astonished some of the civilian instructors, who were as yet unaccustomed to the ways of the cadets. They feared an influenza epidemic, and showed at first much sympathy and anxiety for the sufferers.

Crastie used to tell me how in former days the unpopular professors were teased by the corporals on duty sending up the whole class, one after the other, to look under the table at the bewildered gentleman's boots, followed shortly afterwards by a long string, all asking the same absurd question, or making some stupid remark.

Snuff-boxes lasted a considerable time, but they died out in consequence of the arrival of men selling birds, squirrels, &c., &c., at our gates; pets became all the rage, squirrels being particularly in demand. Bobby and I purchased one, and allowed it to run loose about our room when we were present; but one day our favourite would not allow himself to be caught when the trumpet sounded for parade, and we were obliged to leave him. Alas! on our return he was nowhere to be found. As we had left the window open, we concluded he had jumped out and made his escape to Shooter's Hill Woods, as others had done before him. However, that same night, when the gas was extinguished, and we were all getting into bed, a sudden cry of mingled pain and fright from Bobby revealed the whereabouts of the absent animal: it had gone to sleep in the poor fellow's bed when it

was turned up in the daytime, and resented the arrival of his toes by seizing the first one that came between his teeth. It seemed to me that we were very childish; but Melville declared we were 'not so bad as we used to be.' He remembered once an old cadet pouring a can of cold water over two unpopular young cadets as they lay in their beds. In the morning the state of their room caused a report to be made to the officer on duty, who ordered the two sufferers to fall out after breakfast, and asked them how the accident had occurred? The first had made up his story beforehand, and at once related how ill he had been in the night! how sick he had felt! and, unable to bear it, he had risen from his bed to procure a basin of water to bathe his head; the room was pitch dark, and upon his return with the pewter basin in his hands, his foot caught in a projecting nail, and he fell, throwing the water all over his bed. The officer merely said, 'Indeed!' and turning to the second victim, he asked, 'How came your bed, which is opposite to that of the last speaker, to be so flooded?' He, like the other, was afraid of telling the truth, as he ought to have done; and having no story ready, he stammered and stuttered, and at length blurted out, in despair, 'Exactly in the same way as the other gentleman's, sir!' I need not say that speedy punishment followed both delinquents.

The month had now come to a close, and we were reported upon in study and out of study. All who had been well spoken of by the professors were commended, the idle and inattentive punished. We were obliged to display our goods and chattels, all neatly arranged upon our beds, for the inspection of the officer on duty—shirts neatly folded together, stockings by their side; nightcaps close by; boots, uniforms, Bible and Prayer-book, &c., &c.,—each in its proper position. I believe these inspections saved our parents considerable expense; they prevented our turning these necessary articles into the more inviting form of pickled mackerel, marmalade, and other good things.

Now whenever Crastie had a cold he became very deaf, obliging us to bawl in his ear to make him hear. At one of the monthly inspections he was very bad, as deaf as a post, and when the officer examined his kit, his Prayer-book was not forthcoming. He asked Crastie where it was? Not a word could he hear, but seeing that a question was put to him he gave the usual excuse, 'Gone to the wash, sir!' This was too much for the subaltern, who hurried from the room.

Crastie was a simple fellow. I heard that when he first joined they played him many tricks. One night some one asked him what time it was? Having no watch, he did not know; so they told him to take a candle, run out into the square, and consult the sun-dial. Out he ran, followed shortly by several others to see the fun. In vain he strained his eyes, shaded them with his hand, and held the flickering dip in different positions, he was obliged to return and say that the candle gave such a poor light he really could not see the face of the dial with sufficient distinctness to tell what o'clock it was.

However, one day he turned the tables upon his tormentors. They pretended to be very friendly with him, and brought in a couple of plates, and asked him if he would like to be mesmerized. He willingly consented, as he had seen the trick before, and was determined that for once the biter should be bit. A previously-prepared plate was given to him, the under surface of which had been well blackened with the smoke of a tallow candle, and a little water was poured into it. Crastie and the one who was to be the mesmerizer sat down upon chairs opposite one another, each holding their plates in their left hands. Crastie was then told to go through the same motions as the operator, whose plate was perfectly clean. He first dipped his fingers into the water, and then passed them round and round the bottom of his plate. Crastie followed suit, then he drew his fingers all over his own face; but Crastie, instead of following his example, quietly stroked his vis-à-vis's face with his well-blackened digits, leaving four

telling lines, to the surprise of the audience, who turned the laugh against the unfortunate mesmerizer, as he hurried from the room to wash his face.

After the monthly inspections the Mutiny Act and Articles of War were read out to us by a glib-tongued subaltern who ran along the pages at a tremendous pace, rendering it impossible to follow him. He stopped at last quite exhausted, and I came away with a kind of confused idea that, if I mutinied, I was for the first offence to suffer death, and for the second offence, not only to suffer death, but also to forfeit one penny a day of my daily pay.



See page 284.

One night I was awoke by a lantern flashing in my face, I looked up and saw our orderly officer taking stock of us as we lay in bed. He paid us these nocturnal visits every now and then to see that no drinking parties were going on and that every one was present in their own room. Melville told me they had once played the officer a capital trick. When he first joined, he was placed in a room with three well-known fast men; the authorities suspected them of having these festivities occasionally, and the orderly officer had made up his mind to put a stop to them if he could. They were aware of this, as he so often visited their room at night, and they had had some very narrow escapes, and therefore concocted a little plan to pay him off.

They purchased half a dozen sugar cigars, with gilt paper ends, and placed them in a tumbler upon the table, together with a couple of wine bottles filled with a weak solution of blacking, some tumblers, spoons, and lump sugar. They then waited until the gas was turned off, undressed themselves, and sat round their table singing songs as loud as they could, and thumping the oak with applause at the end of each chorus. This had the desired effect, they soon heard the creaking of the door in the passage leading from the officers' quarters. Their voices were suddenly hushed, but they made as much noise as they could in scrambling into bed. The door was quickly opened, in rushed the zealous officer with his lantern,

pleased to see the evidences of the carousal upon the table. He seized triumphantly the two bottles and tumbler of cigars, and began to smell the empty glasses; but no indication of spirituous liquor did they give; he could not make it out, and applied his nose to the top of the bottles—blacking unmistakably; examined the cigars—only sugar. He saw it was a sell, and the snoring from under the four pairs of sheets sounded more like suppressed laughter, as he quickly decamped, leaving his spoils behind him. It certainly had the effect of diminishing the number of his visits.

Fair time had now arrived, and with it a long and stringent order, threatening us with no end of penalties, if we dared venture into Charlton Fair, which was about to be held in a field not very far from our barracks. There had been so many rows there in former days that the Governor was determined to try and prevent our going.

These disturbances commenced some time before by two or three cadets quarrelling with some of the booth-keepers, who handled them rather roughly; so next night nearly the whole Academy turned out to avenge the insult offered to their comrades.



They fell into ranks, and the corporals marched them over in battle array, and they attacked the whole place indiscriminately. The struggle was severe, but short. Discipline triumphed, and the discomfited booth-keepers, gipsies, and such like, were driven from the field; all their canvas tents and other constructions, levelled to the ground, which was covered with the débris of fancy bazaars, gingerbread nuts, and broken 'knock-em-downs.' The victorious army returned in triumph to Barracks, but when the whole matter was represented to the authorities, no leniency was shown them; numbers were dismissed, and others rusticated.

After these heavy punishments, no one dared venture to go for some time: at last one fellow was determined he would run the risk; he waited till the officer had called the Roll at night, and then cleverly slipped out of Barracks and escaped. His comrades dressed up his bolster and pillow, surmounting them with an old wig, and carefully laid them between the sheets. They knew the officer would be sure to come round late at night during such an eventful period, and that he would probably make a minute inspection of the absentee, whose character would not bear looking into.

As one o'clock struck these predictions were verified, the official appeared, drew aside the curtains of the bed containing the dummy, put up his eye-glass, for he was very shortsighted; and there lay a figure with its face to the wall, evidently sound asleep. He left the room satisfied. Next morning a report came to the Governor that a cadet had been creating a disturbance at the fair, giving at the same time a minute description of the culprit. They thought they had found him out; but when he was asked, 'Whether he had not been to the fair,' he refused to give a direct answer, and said: 'I appeal to the officer on duty, whether he did not see me safe in bed at one o'clock, with all the doors firmly padlocked.' The officer replied: 'He certainly did.' 'Then, General,' said he, 'how could I have been at the fair?' Such a strong alibi saved him, and the authorities were fairly puzzled.

The half year was now drawing to a close, and we were busy preparing for our examination: it lasted ten days and was very severe and searching, as we were tested in every subject we had studied during the whole term, and if we did not obtain the qualifying number of marks in the principal subjects, we were not allowed to mount into a higher class.

Many were the eager consultations I had with Bobby, sitting on the gun in front of our room, as I showed him my examination papers, and asked



him to decide whether my answers were correct or not. But when the credits were given out, all anxiety vanished: I had done better than I expected, and gained several places, besides being qualified for promotion to a higher class. Many of our top men had fallen very low, for their high position on joining was due to their great knowledge of classics; but as the languages of the living took the place of the dead as soon as they entered the Academy, the good mathematicians and linguists easily took their place. The last day of the term was indeed a grand affair.

The Commander-in-Chief and a large staff of generals and other officers came to review us. We marched past in full dress to the beautiful music of the Artillery band, performed several evolutions, and received great praise from all the officers present.

The prizes were afterwards distributed, and we were dismissed to our homes for a vacation of six weeks.

'How well he looks! How straight he holds himself! No more high shoulders now!' Such were a few of the remarks which fell from my delighted parents, after the first happy greeting was over, as I sat down to give them a long account of the Academy, and told them all about our drills, studies, and amusements.

My father was anxious to know whether I thought the country would obtain better officers under the competitive, than it had done under the old nomination system?

I told him it was indeed a difficult question to answer; the subject had often been mooted at the Academy and vigorously discussed.

The advantages of the old system were stated by its advocates to be:

1st. That entering younger, and making a longer stay at the Academy, gave them a better idea of drill and discipline, and turned them out better officers.

2nd. That being young cadets for eighteen months, they learnt to obey their seniors, and were kept at the same time in good order, as no young cadet dare drink, smoke, gamble, enter a public-house, or offend in any way, without being severely punished by the older ones, carrying out one of the mottoes in the dining hall: 'Through obedience learn to command.'

3rd. That the nomination system was likely to provide a more gentlemanly class of young men than the open competitive.

On the other hand, the admirers of the competitive system gave the following reasons for its superiority over the former:

1st. That being older they would be steadier, more sensible, and more likely to get on with their studies.

2nd. That having a larger number of young men to choose from, the successful candidates would naturally be much cleverer and more talented; for, while 25 or 27 used to be selected from perhaps 30 candidates, 48, or may be, 50, are now taken from 150 or 200.

3rd. That the great expense of cramming schools, added to that of the Academy, would be a bar to the entrance of a lower class of competitors.

My cadet life, however, came suddenly to a close, for the death of a distant and forgotten relative made me heir to a large property, and my parents were only too glad to send me to college, in preference to their only son serving his Queen and country far from his home, in distant lands.

'Extract from Company order. R. M. Academy. Woolwich.

'The Commander-in-Chief has been pleased to accept the resignation of Gentleman Cadet Edward White.'

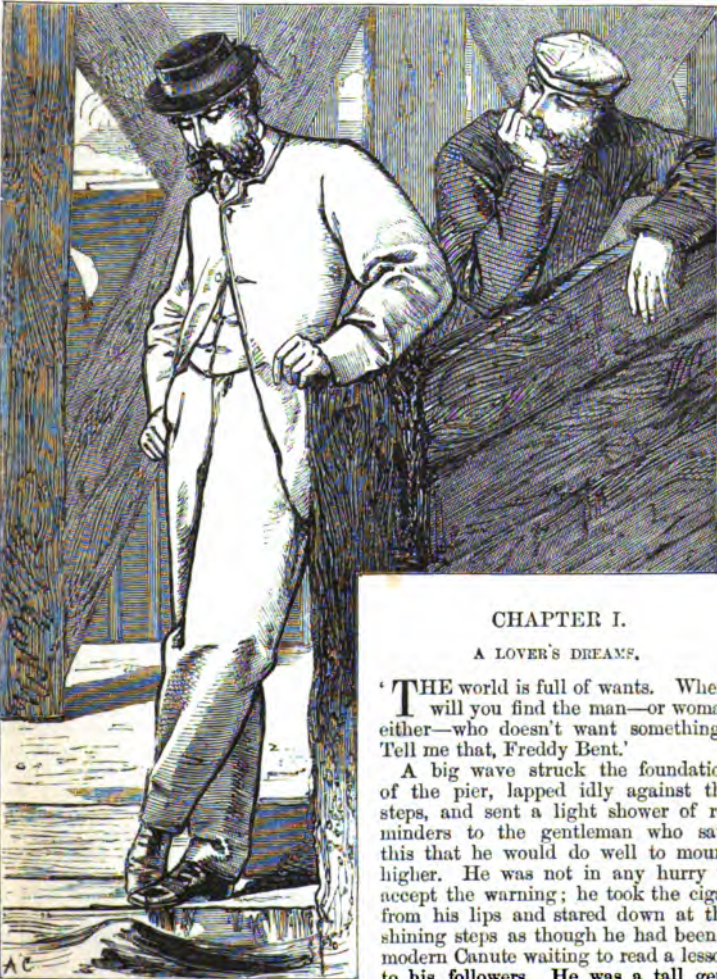
ANSWER TO MR. HERVEY'S CHARADE (P. 175).

CRICKET-MATCH.

LONDON SOCIETY.

OCTOBER, 1864.

WANTED—A WIFE, WITH MONEY.



CHAPTER I.

A LOVER'S DREAMS.

‘THE world is full of wants. Where will you find the man—or woman either—who doesn’t want something? Tell me that, Freddy Bent.’

A big wave struck the foundation of the pier, lapped idly against the steps, and sent a light shower of reminders to the gentleman who said this that he would do well to mount higher. He was not in any hurry to accept the warning; he took the cigar from his lips and stared down at the shining steps as though he had been a modern Canute waiting to read a lesson to his followers. He was a tall gen-

tleman, with black hair and moustaches, features pale but well cut, and grey eyes at once keen and indolent.

‘Come up on deck, old fellow,’ responded Freddy Bent, ‘or one of your wants

will be dry clothes. Look out, Carisford, there's another coming.'

Sir Guy Carisford, thus apostrophised, raised his head slowly. He saw distant sails, tiny sheets of gleaming white in some sudden sunbeam; ripples of foam on the blue water far away; crags shining coppery red in the evening light, and the muscular figure of his friend Freddy Bent leaning carelessly over the chains of the pier.

'What is your want, David?' said Sir Guy.

Freddy laughed.

'Haven't you forgotten that? I'm not like David now, Carisford.'

'No, it would take a good many years of sheep-feeding in the wilderness to develop all that muscle and bronze. I asked a question, David.'

'What is my want? Rather what isn't it, Guy? Well, principally I think it is that beautiful hazy uncertainty and delusion, a place under government.'

'Pshaw!'

Sir Guy moved up the steps and began to walk up and down speculatively.

'From bare boards to matting, from matting to carpet and greatness, Freddy, or to be made a queen's messenger; that is your want. Never fear, you'll get it in time. Now for mine. Isn't it written on my forehead?'

'No; but I can tell you what it ought to be. You should marry, Guy Carisford.'

'Exactly. So I would if I could find a wife with the requisite qualifications.'

'Meaning—'

'Meaning money, Freddy Bent.'

'Money is a good thing,' said Freddy, slowly, 'but—'

'Love is better, eh, young Corydon?'

'Yea.'

Sir Guy stopped in his walk and flung his cigar into the sea.

'I wonder what it's like—that stuff that very young boys and girls profess to feel before they get married. Tell me five years hence, Freddy. Men and women marry, and the world goes on, a jaded old mill-horse but game to the last, so far as the wheel is concerned; but how many marriages do you think have any love in them? No, no; it's a mutual-benefit association, old fellow. What you haven't got you want, and must look for a wife who has it.'

'You don't mean all that, Guy; you know you don't.'

'But I do mean it, David. It was impressed upon me in my cradle, and given to me in my pap—if ever I took the compound. My father mortgaged

his acres and spent the money right royally; and I was brought up to marry an heiress. Why shouldn't I?'

But Freddy was thinking of a time long ago when this man nursed him through a sharp illness as tenderly as a woman could have done; and he did not answer. You see he was romantic, and thought it a horrible thing for a man to aim deliberately at marriage for money.

'Look there, Freddy,' said Sir Guy, 'that little pink boat about marks the spot we plunged from this morning. What a lot of muffs the bathers are here! but they don't come to bathe. I saw one great fellow tottering out with a rope in his hand. You and I have seen some swimmers in our time, haven't we? Come, Freddy, this is getting stale.'

The two gentlemen passed through the toll-gate towards the end of the esplanade. The road was thronged with carriages, and they had to wait a little before they could cross to get to the hotel. While they waited, one in the line of carriages stopped, and Freddy Bent ran up to it.

Sir Guy leaned against the iron partition watching his friend, and I am afraid that the curl of his handsome lip was a little sarcastic. Freddy seemed so very much in earnest about everything; and there he was talking and laughing as if his whole heart were in it, as a pale glove was held out to him, and a pleasant young face under a straw hat smiled down upon him.

'The Saltouns, I suppose,' said Sir Guy, when the carriage had passed on.

'Yes, they do the thing in style, you know; a house in its own grounds—not much of grounds, by the way, to speak of. I say, you can't dine yet; let's have a climb over the rocks.'

Sir Guy shrugged his shoulders slightly. 'Thank you—I've outgrown that sort of thing. These Saltouns, Freddy; two young ladies, a papa and mamma, so far as I could see. But the young ladies are not sisters, only cousins. Which is Miss Saltoun, the heiress? the one who spoke to you last?'

'Yes. What do you know about them?'

'Simply that I came down here to marry Miss Saltoun.'

Freddy recoiled a step and stared at his companion.

'That is, of course, if I could persuade her to have me,' added Sir Guy, calmly.

'You!' stammered Fred. 'You don't even know her.'

No, but I hope to do so.'

'May one ask how?'

'Certainly. Through your means, David.'

'I—I'm afraid I can't promise, Sir Guy.'

The baronet put his hand on Freddy's shoulder and smiled.

'Well, go for your walk, David. You will be late for dinner.'

Freddy turned away in his perplexity and walked a few steps. But Sir Guy and he had been friends for many years, and Freddy was softhearted. The baronet was a great man in his estimation, as, indeed, he was in the estimation of others. Matchmaking mammas were affectionately disposed towards him, notwithstanding that report said he was an embarrassed man. Report might lie, and if not, he was a baronet; he contrived to live in society, and would doubtless contrive to support a wife. Men of mark looked after him when he passed, with interest and curiosity. If report told the truth, how did he live? He was seen everywhere; he had travelled; he must spend money. There was only one solution of the problem whispered occasionally by daring lips; did he gamble? But Sir Guy only smiled when the whisper reached him; no, he never gambled; he practised the strictest economy, and took the best possible care of his affairs, that was all. He had no taste for vice in any form; he liked all that was good and honourable and upright; only he was straitened for means, and he had been brought up to marry an heiress, and clear his estate.

When Freddy Bent had walked those few steps he repented, turned back, and took his friend's arm.

'We won't quarrel, old fellow.'

'No, David.'

And Sir Guy's tone had a certain musical kindness in it which Freddy had heard before and fancied he understood.

'You like to paint yourself in ugly colours, Guy. I was a fool to be touchy, but you see I shouldn't like Alice Saltoun to fall a victim to a—fortune-hunter. I'll get you the introduction, and I'll warn her against you.'

'As what?'

'As a man with no heart,' said Freddy, laughing. 'And then if you should fall in love—'

'Hush, David; that's a stupid way of speaking. I'm not going to fall in love with anybody: don't believe in it. I'm going to try for a wife, that's all—with money. You don't think that I shouldn't be good to her, do you?'

'Carisford, you are thirty; six years older than—'

'Five-and-twenty, believe me; that has been my age for the last five years. Postpone your walk, David; I take your offer. You shall introduce me to Saltoun père, and we'll talk about the Colonial Restriction Bill, or how the last grid-iron fared in Committee, or some other weighty matter on which we are both profoundly ignorant, and consequently profoundly wise. And now let us dress and dine. Wasn't there a concert to be walked through?'

CHAPTER II.

FREDDY BENT MAKES A BLUNDER.

'Sir Guy, and once again Sir Guy!' said Mrs. Saltoun to herself. 'A fortnight ago we did not even know the man, and now this is the third riding party, to say nothing of walks and boating excursions, which keep me in perpetual terror. Where are you bound for, young people?' she added through the open window.

'The downs, mamma.'

'The downs! Well, you know best, of course, but there's nothing to see there except a big goose-pond, is there?'

'No, nothing to see. I wish you would come too. A good breezy gallop would freshen you up for the day.'

'I dare say, Charlotte. I'll take it vicariously, my dear, if you please. Sir Guy will return to luncheon with you, of course?'

The baronet took off his hat, with an expression of regret that he had letters to write, and should be obliged to go back to the hotel.

'She never asks me,' murmured Freddy, in an aside to Miss Saltoun.

'Because she knows it isn't necessary.'

'Give me a minute or two, Alice,' said Freddy, in a low tone. 'There is no speaking to you in these days, and I have something to say.'

'Let them go first, then, and mind the hurdy-gurdies.'

Sir Guy saw the little manoeuvre and made no effort to change his position. He was very thoughtful and grave, and there was no trace in his manner of the careless nonchalance which had offended Freddy Bent a fortnight ago. When they got away from the streets, the hurdy-gurdies, and German bands, and performing monkeys, and reached the open common, he might have fallen back to join the two in the background, according to custom, but Sir Guy did not do this. Charlotte Saltoun spoke

to him, and he roused himself to answer, but was astonished to find how the necessity irritated him. A great level down lay before them, and in the distance a low line of hills, all purple and gold in the sunlight; but it was not their beauty that made the baronet thoughtful. He was wondering what Freddy Bent had got to say to Alice Saltoun. Was it possible that Fred had any such views as his own, after all, or was it, as he had believed hitherto, nothing but a boy and girl friendship? Anyhow Sir Guy caught himself condemning it. He was anxious and uneasy; his usual composure and self-possession were unattainable; and polite as his companion found him he wished more than once that she was a hundred miles away.

'Here's mamma's goose-pond,' said Charlotte Saltoun, suddenly, as the whole flock swept flapping and screaming across the path. 'And now I wish those geese were all swans, for my horse isn't going to stand that. Don't trouble, Sir Guy, I shall manage very well.'

Sir Guy looked after her and acquiesced, only following at a slower pace than hers, and uttering a low vituperation against the goose-pond. He did not know that he should feel positively friendly towards it when he came back.

'Charlotte is a perfect horsewoman,' said Miss Saltoun, 'and your friend knows what he is about, Freddy.'

'Tell me what you think of him, Alice,' said the young man, abruptly.

Miss Saltoun sent a curious glance into his face and laughed.

'I think, Freddy, that he would look better if he cut off his moustache.'

Freddy uttered a hasty ejaculation, and then went up close to Alice.

'You never speak in that light way to Carisford,' he said, reproachfully.

'I haven't known him quite so long as I have known you, Freddy Bent.'

'That's true. We have always been on good terms, Alice, haven't we?'

'To be sure we have; I hope we always shall be. What's the matter, Fred?'

'I don't know. I don't want you to lose your heart to Carisford, Alice.'

The expression of Miss Saltoun's face ought to have warned Freddy that he had better be quiet, but he was looking down, and did not see it.

'Of course your wishes would be sufficient in any case. May I ask why you express them?'

'Because he has no heart to give in return.'

'What an uncomfortable state of

things! I suppose you mean that he is already appropriated?'

'No, I don't.'

'Then he has been engaged, and she is dead, or has jilted him. What a shame!'

Freddy shook his head.

'Alice, Carisford is a very good fellow, and my friend, but—'

'A very friendly part you seem inclined to act,' she retorted, turning upon him with a little scorn. 'Did you ever hear the aspiration, "Save me from my friends," Freddy Bent? If you don't take your hand from my bridle I'm afraid I shall be obliged to hurt it. You and I know how we stand, of course, but the rest of the world may not be so wise.'

It was just at this juncture that Sir Guy reined in his horse and looked round. He turned away quickly, and spoke to his companion with a slight smile.

'Perhaps we had better not go back that way, Miss Saltoun.'

'You don't know how you minister to my self-importance, Sir Guy,' returned the young lady. 'I was Miss Saltoun once, before my cousin came to us. I have fallen, you see. I am simply Miss Charlotte, a person of no consequence at all. Why are we not to go back that way?'

'Well, I thought perhaps we might be *de trop*.'

Charlotte gave him a puzzled glance, and then laughed.

'Oh dear no; we never think of Freddy in that way. We were children together, you know. He is like a brother, only brothers won't always be made useful; besides, poor Fred has a weakness.'

'A weakness!'

'Yes, it is the best term I can think of; the others are all commonplace. But you, my friend, and not know that!' added Charlotte, raising her eyebrows. 'Shall we join them now, Sir Guy?'

A strange sort of light came over Sir Guy's face, like a reflection from the golden gleams on those distant hills.

'Yes,' he said, 'let us go back. Poor old David! So he has a weakness!'

'Stop, Sir Guy; I had no business to let it out. I thought, of course, that what David knew Jonathan must know. You will promise not to tease him or betray me.'

'I promise—anything.'

'Anything?' said Charlotte, quickly. 'Then you will come to the ball at the assembly rooms?'

'Of course I will.'

Freddy said you hated balls, and he

knew that you would not punish yourself.'

'Freddy was right,' said the baronet, gravely. 'I would not punish myself willingly; and in a general way I am not fond of balls, but—'

'It is different at the seaside, is it not? One is apt to get dull; but really we do pretty well here.'

And then they rode on; and somehow it fell to Sir Guy's lot to be near Alice when she dismounted in the little shrub-

bery of the 'house in its own grounds.' Freddy Bent saw Sir Guy stoop slightly to say something as she gathered up the folds of her riding dress; but her head was turned away, and he only knew by that strange gleam of light which passed again over Sir Guy's face that she had answered him at all. Freddy gave a little groan, and washed his hands of them all.

'You told us a fib, Freddy,' said Charlotte, looking after the baronet. 'Jona-



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than is the most fascinating man I ever saw, and he is coming to the ball.'

'Two of them!' murmured Freddy, lifting up his hands. 'What is there about this man that draws everybody towards him? And if they only knew what I know, what would they think of him then?'

CHAPTER III.

'WAS IT QUITE PRUDENT?'

Mrs. Saltoun put the question to herself first, and then to her husband. She could not always go out with Charlotte and Alice; it was impossible. They would wear her out. And Mr. Saltoun shrugged his shoulders and said, 'Let

them alone, they're old enough to take care of themselves. As for Carisford, he's one of the most sensible men I ever met, and surely you're satisfied to trust them with Freddy Bent.'

And then Mrs. Saltoun gave up the point, and thought a little bit about the days when she was young, and should have enjoyed the rambles on these sunny days as much as any of them.

'Well, I have had my summer,' she said, with a little sigh. 'It's very short to look back upon, and I'm a sober old woman, and know that there never was a day in it as bright in possession as fancy and anticipation had pictured it beforehand. They have got all this to find out—those light-hearted young people who think life is made of roses.'

Perhaps they had, but if so it did not seem to trouble them much. To Freddy Bent, who had known Sir Guy so long, the change in him was wonderful. All his affectation of indolent carelessness was gone, and he could perform feats of rowing and scaling dangerous crags for wild flowers, which his friend would never have conceived possible. And then poor David had blundered, and was aware of it. If Alice had been totally indifferent to Sir Guy before, she would have thought of him after those broken, mysterious hints of Freddy's. A young girl is always sorry for a man who has had some disappointment or grief to bear; and she could not or would not draw any other inference than this from Freddy's words. She was a little indignant at them too. It was hardly her idea of a true friendship that one of these two should throw out hints concerning the other; and Freddy's hesitating, 'Carisford is a good fellow, but—' recurred to her constantly as pitiful and unworthy of him.

They were to meet at the assembly rooms, she knew, for this had been the purport of Sir Guy's speech when she stood in the drive gathering up her riding dress. Alice was hardly conscious herself of the subtle element which had begun to steal into her thoughts about this man. If you had asked her what she thought of him she could not have told. She would have said, perhaps, that he interested her because he was unlike other men, because his talk was not frivolous, but had often in it a power and beauty which made her grave by its very fascination. She never said those small nothings to him which formed great part of her conversation with other gentlemen. She never parried his occasional appeals to her with a smart rejoinder or a sarcasm; and she had not examined herself suffi-

ciently to find out why this seaside holiday had a certain source of interest which other holidays had wanted. Freddy's innuendoes might have passed unnoticed, perhaps, but that Alice was getting used to such warnings, and understood too well what they generally meant. She had been obliged already to answer some half-dozen aspirants for her hand, i.e., her fortune; but then these things were so patent that they gave her no pain. This was another affair altogether.

As she leaned out of the window of her own room, thinking about it, watching the chalky glitter of the white houses in the sun, Sir Guy's face came before her. There was truth and nobleness in it, she thought. How was it possible to suffer any mean, ungenerous suspicions to take possession of her mind? Besides—and at this 'besides' a slight smile stole to her lips, and a colour, which was not the reflection of any sunbeam, came into her face. It was of no use to say 'besides,' for Sir Guy's manner had been such as no woman could mistake. She should see him again at the ball. It is to be feared that this was principally the substance into which poor Freddy's well-meant hints resolved themselves.

'Lady Downham is jealous of you, Alice,' said Charlotte Saltoun, as she stood arranging her dress before the glass. 'She told Colonel Brand that you rouged, and asked him to introduce Sir Guy. By the way, I can't conceive why you persisted in putting on that white thing again. Lady Downham will recognize it. You, who might have a dress for every day in the year if you liked.'

'I wear this dress because white suits me,' responded Alice; 'and what is the use of getting a new one when this is just as good as new?'

Charlotte made a little grimace of dissent.

'Upon my word I think the fates have made a mistake this time; you don't know how to spend your money in the least.'

'No, Charlotte, I don't think I do. I'm not at all sure that it's a happy thing to be an heiress.'

'Some ladies wouldn't object to try,' said Charlotte, drily. 'Why isn't it happy?'

'I said I wasn't sure about it. People seem to think it ought to make one suspicious, a thing that I hate. I wish you wouldn't talk so much about it.'

'Who has made you suspicious now, Alice; Sir Guy?'

Charlotte was occupied with her

dress, and did not see the sudden colour that rose over her cousin's face at the name.

'What is Sir Guy to me?' said Alice, shortly; 'or to you either, Charlotte, that you are always bringing him forward? He is——'

'Ready, children?' broke in Mrs. Saltoun, rousing herself. 'We are very late.'

'Coming, mamma, in one moment. Well, Alice, finish if you please. What is Sir Guy?'

But Alice had lost her vivid colour, and answered with cool indifference.

'I don't know; a disappointed man, perhaps. It is nothing to us.'

'Well, I wouldn't be sure of that. The hypothesis explains a look of "patient sadness," which I have seen on his face, certainly, but——Yea, mamma, we are quite ready.'

CHAPTER IV.

A LITTLE TABLEAU VIVANT.

The tide was rising; it crept on over the sand, and rustled amongst the pebbles on the beach; higher still, and it lapped against the rocks under a smart green balcony, into which the windows of the ball-room opened. Then the moon got up and turned her light upon two people who had come out of the hot crowded ball-room into the balcony. These were Sir Guy Carisford and Miss Saltoun. Alice wore a white cloak fastened at the throat with a clasp that glittered and flashed in the moonlight. The flowers in her hair were white, and her bouquet was white. Within the ball-room the musicians were playing a 'spirit valse,' and Sir Guy smiled as he reared his tall form against the wall and looked down upon her. He would have said that there was no romance in his temperament only a fortnight ago, and now he began to wonder what kept him silent, as though by force, in the presence of this young girl, whom he had openly avowed his determination to marry. A pang passed through Sir Guy's heart at the thought, he did not know why. He did not like to remember that speech of his to Freddy. Alone here in the great silent night, under the stars, with the restless sea rustling and sweeping quietly over the pebbles and the rocks beneath; something not in the scene or the hour, though these helped, had roused Sir Guy to a strange consciousness of wrong and hardness in his past life, and of something infinitely better and greater than he had ever dreamed of, which might come into his future to glorify it. Do him justice. He forgot

at this moment all his plans, all the counsels which had been impressed upon him from his boyhood. He looked down upon that shadowy figure all in white, with the moonbeams falling about her like a pale halo, and did not remember that she was an heiress.

Sir Guy changed his position, leaning forward, with one knee on the balcony and one arm over it, pointing to a distant light.

'Many a good ship has gone down there,' he said, quietly. 'Many a cry of strong despair risen up from mother and father, husband and wife. Did you ever see a wreck? I suppose not. A sight to haunt one for life. This great strong turbulent sea has much to answer for, and yet how quiet and smiling it is now. Do you know what a long sea voyage is like, Miss Saltoun?'

'No; at least not from experience. But I should like to know. I have never lost sight of land.'

Sir Guy turned towards her quickly. Was he going to tell her then that it would be the crowning triumph of his life to bear her away over those waters and witness her pleasure in the wonderful sights, which were old indeed to him, but which would be fresh and glorious again with her at his side? Some such thoughts passed through his mind, but they went no further. As Alice spoke, a sudden glare of light from the ball-room fell upon them, and Freddy Bent, stepping out with his partner, saw the little picture too late to retreat.

'Never lost sight of land!' repeated Freddy, conscious of a little awkwardness, and trying to cover it. 'Don't tell him so if you like peace. He has seen everything that is to be seen, from clouds of flying fish to the saddest sight one can look at—a dead companion, digging his own grave with a single stroke on the water. He has been everywhere, I do believe, and done everything. Why looks he so? With his crossbow he shot an albatross, measuring—who knows what?'

'I wish he had brought it home,' said Charlotte Saltoun. 'I have a great curiosity to see one.'

'Or if you want inland scenery,' pursued Freddy, 'he can take you up the dangerous but mighty Hooghley; he will stretch out before you vast masses of cocoa-nut trees, dates, bananas, and show you buffaloes grazing under them. Natives will come under his hand from Indian villages, and gesticulate, and clatter their silver rings for you; or he will take you to Barrackpore and show you the scene of the mess-room tragedy, and thence into the jungle, where you

will hear the most unearthly sounds that mortal ear can listen to. Will that do?

'Freddy Bent is going to give a lecture at the Mechanics' Hall,' said Charlotte, 'and he is rehearsing. Alice, do you remember what I told you about Lady Downham? Well, I have just heard her talking about you. Did any one ever hear such a voice as that woman has, I wonder. And then her odious yellow face, and her red hair with a parrot tulip stuck in it! But every one knows what her husband married her for.'

A little indescribable sensation of fear checked the smile on Miss Saltoun's lips as her cousin finished this speech.

'What was it, Charlotte?'

'Her money, to be sure. Do you suppose a man like that would have married such a vulgar old creature for anything else? And he never goes out anywhere with her. But the money doesn't do him much good, people say, for she leads him an awful life at home.'

'So he ought to have an awful life,' said Alice in a low tone. 'It's a sin one could never forget; it rouses one's utmost detestation and disgust.'

'What does Alice?'

'Marrying from base motives. I hope people who do that are always punished.'

Charlotte laughed.

'Suppose you were hard up, as gentlemen call it, pinched and in debt—'

'I would beg first, Charlotte, or starve.'

'Starvation is a nice pleasant thing, easy to talk about.'

'Starvation before dishonour,' said Alice, abruptly.

Freddy Bent had the grace to turn his head away. No one looked at Sir Guy: no one saw how the light and kindly warmth and greatness—for there was greatness in him—faded out of his face, and left it white and cold; a rigid face, staring out into the far distance. If he had forgotten for a few brief moments, he could forget no longer. He, who a few minutes ago had looked out into the starlight with his heart full of tender thoughts, stood convicted of this sin which could never be forgotten. He had put before himself money as the first, indeed the only desirable object in marriage. The wife he would be obliged to take, of course, as a troublesome appendage, with her money, and he should have to bear with her as best he could. No voice could have been harsher with him just now than his own, no contempt more supreme than that which he poured upon himself. If they would only go away, all of them, and leave him! If some one would at least break this

terrible silence which had fallen upon them all!

'You have put a spell upon us, Alice,' said Charlotte Saltoun at last, with a shiver. 'You do get so terribly in earnest. But I don't think we are any of us doing right,' she added, 'and I am quite sure that you are not. Besides, it is time to go home; mamma is looking very jaded, and I think I am a bit tired too. Will you come in, Freddy?'

They went away, and Alice got up to follow. Then Sir Guy started from the half-kneeling position which he had been too proud to change when Freddy came out and discovered the tableau.

'Must you go?'

His voice sounded very strange to Alice; to himself it was like a funeral bell. He was bidding her good bye in his own heart, and the knowledge only drew him infinitely nearer to her. To think that he might have won her for his own, and yet that he dared not try!

'Yes,' said Alice. 'It is getting late. Good night, Sir Guy.'

But he only stood looking down upon her, white and irresolute, as though he hardly dared to touch the hand she held out to him.

'Good night,' repeated Alice.

'Good bye,' responded the baronet. 'I hope that you may be as happy as you deserve to be always.'

When she was gone Sir Guy stooped down as if searching for something. The light from the ball-room still fell full upon him, but he did not notice it. He had seen, a little time ago, a single white blossom fall from her bouquet upon the balcony, and now he picked this up and put it to his lips. He could not know that Alice saw the movement, but she did, and then the light was shut out and he was alone. I don't think Sir Guy saw anything of the stars, or the moonlight, or the vast sheet of water sleeping under them as he stood there, staring seawards. Alice was before him, everywhere. He saw the white flowers and the glittering clasp of her cloak; he saw the light falling upon her softly, and knew how beautiful she was, and how he loved her. This he had never known fully until tonight. And then he saw her face turn to him and change into the face of an accusing angel.

The ball-room emptied of its guests, but still Sir Guy stood motionless where Alice had left him. He thought that if she had been there still, he, in his desperation, would have told her all and

thrown himself upon her mercy; but it is probable that he miscalculated his courage. His thoughts came and went with a strange, desultory indistinctness; thoughts of those days when he wandered to and fro on the earth and saw its wonders; before this great passion and remorse had come near to wither his energies. Could he go back to his old life? And if he did, would it be possible to forget, and be as he was before? Many faces which he had known rose up before him out of foreign lands as he listened to the retreating tide; many recollections of wild adventure and daring indifference to peril; but they never hid for a moment the desperate shame and self-disgust which had come upon him to-night. He was a fallen man. He thought of his friend, and humbled himself. David, whose simplicity he had smiled at, was a wiser and better man than himself, after all. He remembered every word of the conversation which had so nearly terminated in a quarrel between them. As if he were not already sufficiently tortured, he repeated it again mentally; and when he came to this, 'Simply that I came down here to marry Miss Saltoun,' Sir Guy covered his face, into which the shame had risen burning red. He would never see her again.

The tide sank away from the rocks and back over the sand into the distance. Sir Guy leaned over the balcony, held his pilfered flower for a moment suspended, and let it drop on the rock below. Then he passed into the empty ball-room, through the few lounging figures that still surrounded the doors, and went home.

CHAPTER V.

SIR GUY TAKES DOWN THE ADVERTISEMENT.

'Sir Guy Carisford!'

Sir Guy sat at a writing-table with a pen in his hand, and he was revising a somewhat lengthy looking epistle. He took the note from the salver which the waiter presented to him, and put it aside.

'Wait a moment,' said Sir Guy. He finished his revision, folded, sealed, and addressed his letter.

'Let that be taken at once,' said Sir Guy, looking at the man. 'Let a messenger go with it now. You understand?'

'Certainly, Sir Guy.'

Then the baronet opened the envelope which he had put on one side. How was he to be sure that he could keep

his resolution if he did not place it beyond breaking?

'I know what that is,' said Freddy Bent from the opposite side of the room. 'I've had one. You will go, of course?'

Sir Guy did not look up, but he bit his lips, and if Freddy had been near enough he would have seen that the hand which returned the missive to its envelope shook a little.

'I'm afraid not,' replied Sir Guy. 'I leave here for town by the mail this evening.'

'Town!' ejaculated Freddy. 'Leave here! You can't be serious.'

'Very serious, indeed, Freddy.'

Freddy hesitated a moment and then went up to Sir Guy's table.

'Old fellow, something has happened. Can I do anything, or go anywhere for you?'

'No, David.'

Sir Guy's tone was gentler than usual, and Freddy lingered. Sir Guy, confident and self-assured, was one person; Sir Guy in some unknown difficulty another.

'If I could, you know; why you have a right to my services, Guy.'

Then the baronet put down his pen and looked straight into Freddy's face.

'David, I have been a fool. I am punished.'

Freddy's first thought was that Alice had refused him, and with a curious inconsistency he felt both sorry for Guy and angry with her. But Sir Guy read this and shook his head with a faint smile.

'No David, it isn't that. I cannot have the baseness to ask her or see her again. I've learnt my lesson a bit later in life than you, that's all.'

'You would actually marry Alice Saltoun because you love her?' asked Freddy.

Sir Guy nodded.

'If I married her at all, which I never shall do. Hush, David, it's too late. By this time if my orders were obeyed she is reading my letter—the hardest work I ever accomplished; only a bare statement of facts.'

'Carisford—'

'Don't,' interrupted Sir Guy. 'Old fellow, you remember the advertisement that I told you was written on my forehead? Well, it's taken down. My estates will never be cleared in that way. Now go away, David; I've more letters to write.'

Sir Guy wrote his letters, and went out. He went first to the rocks under the balcony of the assembly rooms, and

stood there, thinking. As the tide had crept up last night so it came on now and swept across the rocks with a quiet remonstrance as he turned away. From there he passed on upwards and sat on a ledge overhanging a little bay in which they had wandered together searching for seaweed. There was no weed to be seen now; deep water covered it all, even as deep water hid the pleasant days it spoke of. I think if a judge had been appointed to mete out Sir Guy's punishment, nothing harder could have been found than this letter which he had just written. The story looked so hateful in his own eyes as he wrote it; the hero of it so mean and base. He had not spared himself a single detail, and he never asked for any hope or any answer. In that, perhaps, he was wrong, since it would be impossible for Alice to answer a letter in which no question was asked. But as Sir Guy had gone to an extreme in his previous notions concerning marriage, so he went straight to the opposite extreme now. There was one more place which he meant to visit in his spirit of self-torment. This was a sort of natural terrace up amongst the hills; where they had held a sort of picnic; and had been supremely happy under the usual picnic discomforts. He could not go round by the ordinary path to this place, but made one for himself, springing from crag to crag like a wild huntsman.

Well, the sun shone on the hills just as brightly as ever, only the music of voices and light laughter was not heard on the terrace. He sat down and called the scene back again. He looked away along the purple moorland and the line of blue hills in the distance. A haze of sunlight over all; over the quivering leaves of the low trees; the grass, burnt brown in patches, and the wealth of wild flowers scattered about amongst the crags.

He remembered that Alice had wished for one of those bits of heath growing high up in a fissure above his reach, and that he had climbed the rock to get it for her. He remembered Freddy's indolent raillery, and how little he had minded it; and then he thought of Alice with a great pang, and wondered what she thought of him. 'If she cared for me ever so little then, she doesn't now. And yet I swear that if she were penniless I would choose her before the whole world.'

Sir Guy was destined [to be tried a little harder still. At this moment he sat alone on the terrace, kicking the loose stones about moodily, and wondering at the indefatigable tourists on the

rocks above him, in the blazing sun; at the next, Charlotte Saltoun and her cousin turned the corner of the rock, and stood suddenly before him.

Sir Guy's face grew white, as it had done last night on the balcony. When Charlotte Saltoun accosted him lightly, and told him that she had heard from Freddy of his shameful conduct, an insane suspicion flashed across him that Freddy had made everything public, and he did not dare to speak.

'But are you really going, Sir Guy? We made sure of you for Thursday.'

'You are very good,' responded the baronet. 'I'm afraid it will be impossible for me to stay.'

'Well, perhaps you will come back again,' said Charlotte, moving on. 'At any rate, we shall see you before you go.'

Alice never said a word, never looked at him; so he knew that she had read his letter. This was just the one drop too much in Sir Guy's cup. He could have borne to go away without an answer to his letter, indeed he had told himself that he did not even hope for one; but now that Alice was there before his eyes, he could not go without speaking to her. Sir Guy had rarely in all his life acted from any sudden impulse, but he did so now. He started forward and stood beside her, looking down.

'May I say one word to you, Miss Saltoun? I have no right to ask it, but—'

And then he paused. Charlotte just looked at them, turned away, and went on down the hill. She knew nothing about Sir Guy's reasons for going away in such hot haste; she did not even know that he had written to her cousin; but she did know that no one wanted her up there on the terrace.

'I told mamma how it would be last night,' said Charlotte; 'and now there's an end to all fun. When two people get engaged, there's never any good to be done with them.'

And then she turned the corner of the rock, and was out of sight of the terrace.

'I cannot part with you in this way,' said Sir Guy. 'I meant to go away without seeing you again. I never would have sought you out; but now that you are here I cannot let you pass away for ever and stand by silent. Say at least that you forgive me.'

'If there is anything for me to forgive, Sir Guy—yes.'

'And believe, if you can, that my love for you is sincere, and that I am punished as I deserved to be. If—if

you were poor instead of rich it would be the dearest hope of my heart to win you for my wife. Is this too hard for you to believe?

'Sir Guy,' said Alice, 'if you had asked me to be your wife, without telling me all this; if afterwards I had heard it, even from your own lips, you would have darkened my whole life; as it is——'

Sir Guy turned round with a sudden hope lighting up his face.

'As it is?' he repeated.

As it was, Sir Guy did not get punished as the sternest moralist would have had him punished, for he won his wife. Perhaps the very frankness of his confession, and the chivalry with which he gave up all right to be heard, were powerful agents in his favour—anyhow,

he won his wife. What they found to talk about up on the hill for the next hour or two, and what the indefatigable tourists thought of them must remain amongst the unsolved mysteries of life. When the baronet got back to his hotel the tide was a good way out, and Freddy Bent began to warn him that he would miss the train. Sir Guy looked at him in the utmost astonishment, and then he put his hand on Freddy's shoulder with a smile.

'I had forgotten all about it. Never mind the train. Old David,' said Sir Guy, gravely, 'I am not going to town. You and I are going to the Saltouns this evening, and every evening until further notice. There are people in the world more merciful than you, and I am going to marry Alice Saltoun.'

A WEEK'S HOLIDAY.



ES! I was walking along Lombard Street, one Friday afternoon, a few weeks ago, in no very cheerful mood, for the Bank had just raised the rate of discount one per cent., and I had several promising joint-stock schemes which I wished to place upon the market. What can be done at seven per cent. is simply impossible at eight, and I felt much like a man who is kept out of his property.

While in this unpleasant frame of mind I came suddenly across a friend who was hit as hard as myself, but who was of a far more elastic disposition.

'Eight, Sam,' I said, 'I hardly expected it.'

'We shall have it higher,' was the annoying reply, 'if these joint-stock schemes increase and multiply.'

'Don't talk like a money-article,' I rejoined, 'you may just as well try to mop back the Atlantic.'

'Or swallow California,' he retorted.

'In ten years' time,' I said, somewhat pompously, 'no business requiring more than fifty

thousand pounds capital will be found in any other form than that of a limited liability company.'

'Don't prophesy, but tell us what to do during the next eight days.'

'I've no idea.'

'I have: we'll go to the Low Countries. A week's tour will do us both good, and give the "precious metals" time to flow in, and ease the market. There's something soothing, in our present condition, to go where little is thought of but money-making, and where the greatest banker bears the pleasant name of Hope.'

I agreed, almost mechanically, to this plan: we dined in the neighbourhood of Cornhill, and, to be strictly truthful, I may mention that we got outside a two-penny omnibus at the corner of Bishopsgate Street.

'To start the journey cheerfully,' said Sam, 'I'll give you a conundrum. Why need our conductor have little fear of the cholera?'

Of course I gave it up.

'Because (as you heard him tell the driver) he's got ten insides.'

When we reached the 'Flowerpot,' we were asked to get down, and form two more 'insides' to oblige a costermonger.

'I've often been asked to get outside to oblige a lady,' said Sam, 'but this is quite a new sensation.'

A few minutes before seven o'clock in the evening we arrived at the Shore-ditch Station. There seemed to be something very strange, if not radically wrong, in starting for 'the Continent' from this quarter of London, but there was little time for reflection. In less than two hours we found ourselves at Harwich—that is at a platform, and a pier with a few beacon lights, and we tottered at once on board a floating hotel—the steamer 'Avalon,' belonging to the Great Eastern Railway. For those who like a little sea, there are no channel steamers fitted up with more regard to the passengers' comfort than these Rotterdam and Harwich vessels. We took a light supper, went to bed, got up in the morning, and really washed and dressed ourselves—an operation that is not often performed on board a short passage steamer for want of conveniences. At seven o'clock we were pleasantly taking our breakfast coffee on deck as we floated up the Maas to Rotterdam, and criticising scenery which is more remarkable for the industry that made it, than for any picturesque quality. Land reclaimed from the sea has the same characteristics nearly all the world over; but rural Holland has contrived to give itself a distinctive character by the introduction of many windmills.

We took the Dutch custom-house officers on board from a boat in the river, so that our luggage was examined before we arrived at Rotterdam. When we got to the pier at eight o'clock, we had, therefore, nothing to do, but to walk quietly on shore, and to enter an omnibus like ordinary citizens.

'Halloo!' shouted Sam; 'there's some imposition here. Where's our old friend, Rip Van Winkle, with the conical hat and balloon breeches? where's the immortal hero of the 'Cork Leg'?

Sam's observation was only too well founded. The men were dressed in that bad imitation of evening costume which is peculiar to Thames pilots, and it was only the poorer women who wore caps, or metal head-dresses, like helmets.

Every Dutchman smoked in the omnibus without asking leave, and a boy about six years old sucked a cigar instead of a sugar-stick. We arrived at a hotel, and were received by the master, who was smoking, and by two waiters, who had evidently just put down their cigars. We dined at a very

good *table-d'hôte*, where a pint bottle of Medoc was given to each of us, as part of the dinner, and where cigars and pipes were introduced almost before the dessert. We walked over the bridges, along the quays, and under the pleasant shade of the trees in this Dutch Venice, admired the flowers in the windows, and laughed at the mirrors so placed amongst them, that the inmates of each house could see the whole traffic of the street. While so engaged, we became suddenly conscious of an unpleasant, overpowering smell.

'What can it be?' exclaimed Sam, who was accounted a wit. 'It can't be decayed tradesmen, the town's too thriving.'

'Decayed vegetables,' I answered.

Decayed vegetables it was, for on some of the canals was floating a thick scum of cabbage leaves, lettuce leaves, corks, stalks, bits of wood, and potato-parings. Men in black mud barges were dredging some of the streams, and some of the canals looked like the old pictures of the Fleet ditch at the period when it was an open sewer, and not a shining river. The bargemen are not assisted by horses, but have to pole their craft along by digging into the bed of the river with their noses over the savory flood. The canals not only run through the streets, but under them; and looking down a grating in the middle of a roadway, we saw a Dutch Charon and his companions smoking in the cool shade of a tunnel. The roads are not very smooth, and the bridges are constantly being raised for the passage of large craft, so that riding in hack carriages is not common. These vehicles are three shillings and sixpence an hour—a price far above the Continental average. In other respects—hotel living, for example—there is no difference between Dutch or French, and Belgian prices.

'The people are wonderfully like the English in appearance,' remarked Sam, 'and wonderfully like them in their love for money making.'

'The worst preparation for a journey,' I returned, attempting to be philosophical, 'is to start with a belief that human nature is not the same in all countries. Conditions of living may differ—'

'Exactly,' interrupted Sam, showing a decided determination to cut me short; 'if you want a barber here, you go to a shop where a brass dish is fluttering before the door, like a gold fish at the end of an angler's rod; if you go to a place where the usual barber's pole is sticking

out across the street, you either find yourself at the burgomaster's, or at the office of some foreign consulate. Places where they work—their workshops, in fact—they call workhouses. Now in England a workhouse is the last house where you would look for industrial activity.'

From Rotterdam we went to Amsterdam by the railway which runs to the Hague, Leyden, and Haarlem, and found that such travelling in Holland was slow, but punctual. Sam thought that Hague had been politely altered from ague, out of compliment to royalty, which had fixed its residence there, and certainly the country looked remarkably swampy. The fields, intersected by dykes instead of hedges, looked like a vast billiard-table, but rich and luxuriant.

'Ah!' exclaimed Sam, suddenly bursting into poetry.

'How weary, flat, fresh, and profitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world.'

'What must be a Dutchman's feelings,' I remarked, in a true spirit of cockney pride, 'when he first sees our Greenwich or Primrose Hill?'

'Or, what he is even more likely to see,' returned Sam, 'the *Montagne de la Cour*, at Brussels.'

In Amsterdam we, of course, found another Dutch Venice, with canals even more putrid than those of Rotterdam: 'Her home is in the sea, and the rotten cabbage-leaf clings to the marble of her palaces.'

The old Spanish houses here give the city a very picturesque effect, though as fast as they are undermined by the ever-encroaching water, and fall or are pulled down, they are replaced with Parisian-looking houses. The French have a wonderful power of propagating their ideas. French shops are on the Dutch quays and boulevards, and the French language is largely spoken by the natives. The general aspect of many of the canal streets reminded us very forcibly of Lower Thames Street, but the houses had a grand and noble look, although chiefly devoted to business. In Amsterdam, and some part of Rotterdam, the Englishman may see what life the old citizens of London led before it was the fashion to live out of the City. The cellars are devoted to goods, part of the ground floor to offices, and the drawing-room floor—large and lofty, in most cases, like the hall of some old City company—is the dwelling-house of the family. Above these are bedrooms, divided by a storehouse for mere goods, from which drops a crane-chain, when

required, in front of the drawing-room windows. In this storeroom—amongst the bales and tubs—the female domestic servants are fond of sitting on a Sunday evening, reading a book, or doing a little needlework, and flirting with their sweethearts in the distance.

Everywhere we came across the everlasting pipe and cigar, the churches even smelling of tobacco like a tap-room, during service time. The actors at the theatres did not exactly smoke during the performance, but they spat upon the stage, which is almost as bad. We went to an open-air concert, where we heard the best band in Amsterdam; but though the selection of music was ambitious—embracing all schools, from Wagner to Auber—the execution wanted fire and precision. Leaving this concert we passed through the Jews' Street, a street that rivals Petticoat Lane, or the Jews' Street in Frankfort. The Jews in Amsterdam reach sixty or seventy thousand. The maniac noises and gesticulations made to sell a few penny-worths of pickled cucumber, showed us unchecked competition in its wildest moments. The only calm man in the jumping, shrieking, bawling crowd, was an old, bent, sallow-faced hermit, with blinking sore eyes, dressed in greasy rage, who watched over a few old Hebrew books displayed in a dirty basket. Perhaps there was something in him of the spirit of Erasmus, but why was he so dirty?

Before we left Holland we had some idea of going to Germany, but the trains to that country were so slow—something like twenty miles an hour being an express pace, that, as our time was very short, we gave up the notion.

'Do you understand much German?' I asked Sam, who was somewhat daring as a linguist.

'About a sausage and a half,' he answered, as if that was quite sufficient.

'Then, I think,' I returned, 'we'd better go to Belgium.'

To get to Belgium we had to go back to Rotterdam, and we made another railway circuit, this time by the way of Utrecht. The country was still as flat as a billiard-table, and as fresh as much water could make it. At Rotterdam we went on board a steamer, much like the Rhine boats, and sailed up the Rhine to Dordrecht, and from there to Moerdijk. On board this steamer we met the only two very fat Dutchmen we had seen, well fed and well dressed; 'clothed, as Sam put it, 'in turtle and fine linen. They gulped Dutch bitters before we started to give them an appetite, and as

soon as the vessel began to move, they plunged down into the cabin and took their places at a very good *table-d'hôte* dinner. Here they ate bits of every dish, drank several French and German wines, and then went on deck and ordered coffee. As soon as the coffee was consumed, they sipped brandy and sugar, and by the time that was consumed we had arrived at Moerdyk. Here the Dutch-Belgian railway awaited us, and we took our places for Antwerp. The travelling was just as slow as on the Dutch-Rhenish line, broken by an examination of luggage at the Belgian frontier. The passport nuisance is now happily got rid of in most parts of the Continent, thanks to the liberality of the French Emperor.

Antwerp may be shortly described as a fortified monastic town, with a fringe of docks—a combination of Canterbury and Wapping. The great election struggle between the clerical and liberal party was at its height, and the people in one of the low quarters, were erecting an image to a favourite saint. The most poetical thing about the churches is their clear, ringing, musical chimes, and next to that their grey, worn exteriors. Many of them, however, are in such a state that they are obliged to be restored, a process which largely destroys their picturesque character. The interiors are mostly overloaded with decoration—bright wooden carvings, wonderful in their way, marble altarpieces and pictures, all piled up together, or over each other, until the effect produced is that of a bazaar, like the Pantheon in Oxford Street. The grand simplicity of the Rouen churches is wholly wanting. Much, of course, is made of Rubens; but Rubens—colour excepted—was of the earth, earthy, and sadly deficient in true religious sentiment. Here, as in Holland, French house architecture is gradually replacing the fine old Spanish style, and the Hôtel de Ville is being restored in a way which makes it look like the Carlton Club.

From Antwerp we, of course, went to Brussels—that little Paris, which every man should see who wishes to thoroughly enjoy the greater city. Everywhere we appeared to be meeting our compatriots, the travelling English. At our hotel in the *Place Royale* we were treated like true Britons, and were supposed to be pining for beefsteaks at every hour in the day. To make this supposition more unjust, we, in common with the rest of the English, simply breakfasted upon eggs and bread-and-butter, while the only French party in

the house were devouring beefsteaks and potatoes. The 'Cock-a-Doodle-Do' coach called for us every morning to go to Waterloo, and the guard of the 'Cock-a-Doodle-Do' aroused us every morning with the 'British Grenadiers,' badly played on a cornopean. Instead of going, however, to the field of battle, we mused upon the emptiness of human glory. The blood that was spilt on that great day has merely manured the fields until they show an exceptional fertility, and has sustained an English four-horse coach for many seasons.

While resting at Brussels we felt a growing desire to use the travellers' privilege of grumbling at the dinner-table. Sam began it. They brought us a leg of mutton and 'trimmings,' and when abroad, we like to leave the cookery of our native land behind us. The joint, as is too often the case when foreign meat is cooked in the English fashion, was decidedly, hopelessly tough.

'Do lambs ever have wooden legs, like Greenwich pensioners?' asked Sam.

'Why?' I inquired.

'Because if they do, we've got one of them, by mistake.' The French wine was bad and dear, but still we ventured upon a little Champagne.

'What brand is that?' asked Sam, showing me the cork.

'*Perrière Jouet*,' I answered.

'Ah!' said Sam, '*Perrière Jouet*, *si o u*, and sometimes *u* and *y*.'

When some very suspicious-looking beef was brought on by way of an *entrée*, Sam was compelled to address himself to the waiter, and he said:—

'I don't mind dining *à la carte*, but I object very much to dine *à la carte* and horse.'

'*Oui, M'sieu*,' replied the waiter, who hardly understood a word he said, and who immediately brought him a *hors-d'œuvre* of boiled salmon.

In the evening we attended a very good open-air concert, where the music was much better, although the admission fee was only half a franc, than it was at our two-franc concert in Amsterdam.

We also went to a popular half-franc theatre, called the *Théâtre-Lyrique*, where three or four thousand people, chiefly of the middle class, were assembled to witness a six-act drama entitled *Le Jésuite*. The plot of the play was of the *Hypocrite* class, designed to show the baneful influence which Jesuits may obtain over the female members of families. Every time the Jesuit came on, every time he moved across the stage, or made a 'point,' the whole

audience howled at him like good-humoured wild beasts. The actor, a Frenchman, was popular, as was shown by great applause at the end of the piece; but the demonstration was made against the Jesuits. After witnessing this piece and its reception, we were not astonished at the electoral excitement which we met with everywhere.

Having seen that the *Hôtel de Villa*, the fine old houses near it, the old palace, and the mannikin were still standing, in spite of the French architectural invasion, we started for Ghent, where the electoral fever was still more strikingly manifested. The grand old market-places, vast, half-deserted areas as large as Russell Square, with the grass growing at their sides, were filled with nearly the whole population of the city. The voting was by ballot, the ballot-boxes were kept open until late at night, and yet no evil resulted, either from the mode or time of voting.

'It seems a pity,' I said, 'that a people who show so much political life, should allow their country to be the hot-bed of protection.'

'It seems a pity,' said Sam, 'that a people who show so much political life, should wear one of the clumsiest sabots ever tolerated. The economy of wooden shoes I can understand; but there must be much bad conservatism lingering in a country where the people shuffle about in a sabot like a barge which has to be kept on the foot with hay stuffed behind the heels.'

From Ghent we went to Bruges, another fine, old, half-deserted city, where the grass was growing in some of the streets, and bare-footed friars were to be met with in the clerical quarters. The size of the grand square struck us here, as at Ghent, and we easily imagined how much more important these cities must have been than the City of London, before the latter threw down its walls, and spread over the adjacent country.

From Ghent we went to Ostend, and after carefully inspecting it, admitted that it was one of the most sensible watering places which we had seen for a long time. Nearly everything in the shape of amusement is ranged along the sea-shore. There is an admirably paved and raised promenade, more than a mile in length, and on the land side of this is built the Kursaal, the Bath-rooms, and a number of restaurants and cafés. The visitors live here by the sea-side, and not, as in English watering-places, at frowsy lodgings. They get all their meals exactly when they want them, at the restaurants and sea-side hotels, and have no quarrels with lodging-house

servants about fragments of cold mutton. Here, I am happy to say, I saw some of my countrywomen, whom I gallantly consider to be the loveliest ladies in the world, and whose complexions appeared brighter by contrast with the sallow cheeks of the Belgian damsels.

'There's the kind of girl,' I said to Sam, pointing out one of the most charming creatures on the promenade, 'who's calculated to make sunshine in a shady place.'

'The most disagreeable quality in a woman,' he replied. 'A girl that makes sunshine in a shady place would light a fire in the dog-days, and we all know what that would lead to.'

The time had now arrived for us to turn our steps homewards. Our week had expired; the Bank rate, as we had expected, had gone down one per cent.; and I, therefore, proposed that we should return from Antwerp by the long sea-passage.

'Do you know Dr. Johnson's definition of a sea-voyage?' asked Sam.

'I do,' I returned. 'Imprisonment, with the chance of being drowned.'

'My sentiments exactly,' returned Sam, 'and I think in days when we hear of Cork pilots and Deal boatmen being lost at sea, we ought not to play the fool as amateur sailors.'

'These are nice sentiments for a descendant of the hardy Norsemen.'

'I'll give you my sentiments about the hardy Norseman,' said Sam; and he immediately burst into the following song, which was original if not conclusive:—

'The hardy Norseman came over the sea—
Luff, boys, luff, on the starboard bow—
The "shortest sea-passage" and rail chase he—
Pipe all hands to the starboard bow.

'Then the saltiest old salt rose up and spake,
"Haul up coals to the top-gallant mast—
Show the hardy Norseman we're wide awake,
Pipe all hands to the top-gallant mast."

"You come from the land of the Vikings, boy
(Pipe all hands to the starboard bow)
All Ratcliff Highway wishes you joy,
(Now, then, luff on the starboard bow).

"The sea is rolling now mountains high,
(Let out reef on the larboard stem)
We'll sail with the wind and the cloudy sky,
(Let out reef on the larboard stem)."

'Said the hardy Norseman, "I hate the sea,
So haul away, let me get on shore,
For pitch-and-toss don't agree with me,
So haul away, let me get on shore."

"What do I hear?" roared the rough old tar,
("Knock that fly off the misen mast"),
Is the hardy Norseman a land-lubbing cur?
(Knock that fly off the misen mast).

"It cannot be that a Viking's child,—
(What 'r'ye doing to the jib-boom sail?)
These men are enough to drive me wild,
(Take in reef in the jib-boom sail!)"

"It cannot be that a Viking's son,
(Who's carved my name on the quarter-deck?)
Can despise the fame which his fathers won,
(Who's carved my name on the quarter-deck?)"

'Said the hardy Norseman, "the stormy" sea—
Haul away, let me get on shore—
Had no more charms for my fathers than me,
So haul away—let me get on shore.

"We're hardy Norsemen, and not Jack tars—
Why can't you hold the vessel still?—
Only used to horses or driving cars—
Why can't you hold the vessel still?"

"We're hardy folks at a steeple chase—
Oh, haul away, let me get on shore!"
Then the captain bowed, with a purple face,
"Hold on, let the lubber creep on shore!"

Of course, after this, we returned by the way of Calais and Dover, and found the money-market, like ourselves, in a most healthy condition.

QUIET LIFE IN MOUNTAIN RETREATS.



HE day wanes. It is late in the afternoon. A cool breeze has sprung up after the panting heat of that long August day, but there is such a balmy languor in the air, that we feel no wish to move, only to lie still, and drink in, without even the faintest exertion, all the transcendent loveliness of the evening scene.

The long lingering ardent gaze of the sun has now at length, only at its departure, brought a faint blush on the glaciers so impassive before, whilst the rocks have also caught the rosy tint, but below them there is repose in the deep green of the ancient pine forest.

Can it be that I am the same, the very same, who but two short weeks ago was anxiously, earnestly engaged in the daily struggle which goes on in our great metropolis? I who had listened to the never-ceasing roll of the carriages, felt the constant moral and physical jostling of my fellow-creatures—lived heart and soul in the tide and traffic

which swell our streets, until I had fondly dreamt that they were a necessity to me, and I to them? Can I be the same, who am now lying idly on the soft grass, without a care or hardly a thought except the dreamy passive ideas which seem to float listlessly about me?

Man, of whom we boast so proudly, is, after all, but a creature of circumstance, and I am not in London, but in a Swiss mountain 'pension.'

The grand tourists who, with their knapsacks and alpen-stocks, boast of doing Switzerland thoroughly in ten days, know nothing of these pleasant little retreats: and those who keep to the beaten paths of travelling, and only venture on an expedition when it has been specially recommended in Murray, may occasionally glance up from the dusty high-road, and wonder where that lovely little side-valley leads up to, but there it ends.

Go on your way, we in the 'pensions' have the best of it, after all! You have the fatigue, we the enjoyment without the fatigue. You may have seen Mont Blanc, Monte Rosa, and all the other grandees, but we have been laying in a stock of health and pleasant memories, of which we shall not easily become bankrupt.

We of the mountain 'pensions' belong to quite a different class from those who go sight-seeing. We are a very quiet set, some people might even call us slow, but we think ourselves of just the right pace. Certainly flirting girls and fast young men do not come here, they do much better down below in the more con-

genial atmosphere of Interlachen, or Lucerne. Indeed I might say that the male element is almost entirely missing, unless an occasional Paterfamilias, or a son or a brother, gets smuggled in among their female relatives.

We are the weak division of that great army which marches annually through Switzerland; the widows and unprotected females, who have not the courage to face alone the rush and hurry of more frequented parts; the invalids and children who could not bear the fatigue of constant movement, and lastly the many whose slender purses would entirely collapse under the ruinous influence of hotel bills, and travelling expenses, but who find it almost an economy to live in the modest 'pensions,' where, though there is all the comfort and freedom from household cares of an hotel, yet the outgoings are small, and have little variation.

The site of a 'pension' is generally chosen on account of the beauty of the surrounding scenery; frequently there is no human habitation for miles round, but the wooden chalets of the peasants. Perhaps it is this very isolation which induces a sort of family feeling among the inmates, who, though they never met before, and probably may never meet again, yet in the strange new life which throws them together and breaks down the cold, dry reserve behind which we English love to fence ourselves, they soon begin to feel like old friends.

And when any new arrivals make their appearance, they are kindly welcomed, and the honours done to them, by those who know the place better. The prettiest walks, the shadiest nook among the pine trees, or the best spot from which to take a sketch, are all readily and willingly pointed out, whilst everything is done to draw the guests within the charmed circle of social intercourse.

A few weeks is generally the utmost that is spent in one 'pension,' then there generally comes a wish to move on to another of the same kind. Perhaps a new person arrives, and in the course of conversation says, 'Have you been to ——? such a delightful place, every one is charmed with it, and so cheap.'

'Suppose we go there?' suggests one of the hearers. Suppose we do. It does not take long to make up our minds, still less to pack up our baggage, necessarily small, where trucks are rarely to be procured, and horses or porters are the substitutes. The next morning our ponies are ordered, and

we are off. A few heartfelt good-byes, perhaps a waving of handkerchiefs as we turn a corner and come again into sight, and we are gone. The gap looks dismal at the dinner-table that day, but it soon gets filled up with new faces, who in their turn disappear to make room for others. For the movement is constant, because the trouble of moving is so small. Those very people who, when at their own homes would have taken weeks to make up their minds to one day's expedition, will think nothing in Switzerland of being ready to start off to a new place at a few hours' notice.

Perhaps a philosopher might explain this phenomenon as having its origin in the *vis inertia* of our human nature. We are difficult to put in motion, but once set us off, and there is no stopping us.

And perhaps this long reverie of mine might never have stopped either, had I not been roused from it by a laughing voice behind me; and as I turned to see who it might come from, a party of ladies returning from their walk discovered my leafy covert. One of them immediately addressed me with 'There you are, as lazy as usual! It would have done you a great deal of good to have come with us, we have had such a delightful walk. We came upon quite a nest of ferns—such rare ones; and there was one little beauty, I had to go right into the middle of a marsh to get it, but I brought it out safe, and here it is.' And so saying she held the plant up in triumph.

I turned to look at the speaker, a merry girl, rather a favourite with us all, whose appearance on this occasion did not belie her words. The light skirt tucked up almost higher than necessary, displayed a pair of boots whose original colour and even shape was lost in a thick coating of mud, and her hands were full of flowers and ferns. Her companions seemed equally laden, though not quite so dirty.

I knew from former experience what would be the fate of those flowers. Tossed about the room for a few days, alternately on table, bed, or floor, until the delicate leaves withered, and the tiny flowerets lost their exquisite bloom, they would then be considered rubbish and thrown away. But for all that 'it was a delightful walk.'

With a parting banter at my laziness, the flower-seekers passed on, to display their treasures to other admiring eyes.

And now from my little shady nook I can see another party returning from their evening walk, but none of them stopped to address me. They are the

aristocracy of our little world. The lady is a Russian princess. Prince, by the way, is only a title of nobility in Russia, not even a very high one, and has nothing to say to the imperial family.

When this Russian princess, her two daughters, and a gentleman we took for a cousin, first made their appearance, the whole pension turned out to see, not them, but their luggage. Five trunks, besides various minor packages, almost blocked up the passage for some hours, until at last they were mounted, how, we never could exactly make out, up the narrow staircase, to the best rooms in the house, which had been ordered three weeks before. After seeing such preparations we were not surprised to see the ladies issuing forth on mountain expeditions in the latest Paris fashions, though to do them justice they never ventured very far.

Although the Russian party were always very polite, and spoke occasionally to those who sat next them at the dinner-table, they never arrived at any intimacy with their fellow pensionnaires. We used to think that the youngest girl would sometimes look longingly from her window at the merry groups in the garden below, but I suppose it was not thought etiquette to let her join them.

And now they have sauntered rather than walked out of my sight, and I see in the distance, coming at a brisk pace down the steep incline, two sisters who had started out in the morning for a long expedition. They were a funny pair, those two, so totally unlike except in their love of walking, for much of which, at first sight, they appeared equally incapable.

The youngest of the two—though neither were in their first or second youth—was fat and round, with a good-humoured face, and plenty of colour. Sometimes we thought that the 'too, too solid flesh' must melt at last under the influence of the very severe exercise she gave it. But no! After a scrambling expedition over mountains, which we had only looked at as something quite beyond our powers, with a broiling sun overhead, she would return as plump as ever. Her sister was slight and spare, a fragile, delicate creature, with a nervous manner, and a constant irritation in her throat, which caused a little cough most irritating to her hearers.

Some person, with more truth than politeness, had called them porpoise and shrimp; and the names stuck to them, as nicknames often will, though we were in terror of their discovering it.

Two or three ladies with sketch-books

and camp-stools were the next who passed by, and I joined them.

On our return to our little wooden residence we found that a fresh family were arriving. The large bell had just been rung to summon the master of the house, whilst it summoned no less surely the idle and curious members of our community to have a look at the new comers.

They were only three in number. The mother, an elderly lady, was seated in a little wooden chair, through which were run two poles for the purpose of carrying it. She had thrown back her hat, and displayed a good deal of rather untidy hair, grizzled, but whether from age or dust was difficult to determine, and a crimson face, sunburnt in a way which the sun of Switzerland seems to have a monopoly for doing in the shortest time.

She looked heated and tired, poor lady! and her bearers seemed equally so, perhaps with more reason. When our host came forward to ask what rooms were required, she was evidently perplexed, and turned to her eldest daughter, who was mounted on a tall, long steed, and so she put in her word, and explained in fluent Anglo-French the wants of the party.

Meanwhile the wooden steps had been brought forward and placed alongside of the horse, but the *decensus* proved anything but *facilis*, for the crinoline was hopelessly entangled round the pummels. It had stood out in every imaginable angle during all the day, and had caught more than once in the brambles, and now, to crown its misdeeds, there was no making it quit its present position.

What should we think if our fair *habituées* of Rotten Row took to riding in crinolines, and yet that would be hardly more ridiculous or inconvenient than the riding costume of our countrywomen in Switzerland. Few out of the hundreds one meets dares to resist public opinion so far as to appear in a modest and suitable dress.

No. 3 of the party, seated on a disreputable-looking pony, seemed to be taking a survey of the group on the balcony, which probably interested her more than the conversation upon the rooms, and whether they were to live in the house itself or in the 'dépendance.'

This same 'dépendance' was a great bugbear. It was situated at ten minutes' distance up a steep hill; and when there were no rooms to be had in the pension itself, the weary travellers had to trudge up to the 'dépendance.' Certainly there was a finer view, and

better air up there, and it was a good training for alpine walks, as we who had only to go up-stairs to bed told those who with cloaks and a lantern were preparing to ascend the hill, perhaps under pouring rain; but no one would have exchanged with them for all that.

At last everything was amicably settled. Our host, who had laden himself with various little packages, hand-bags, a travelling desk, and a strap of books, amongst which the inevitable 'Murray,' and 'The Practical Swiss Guide,' were conspicuous, led the way, followed by the three ladies, who looked stiff enough after the cramped position of the last few hours. The guides unstrapped the carpet bags and cloaks from behind the horses, and carried them up the wooden steps along the wide balcony-passage into the house, and then the poor beasts were led off to get the rest and refreshment which they had so well earned; and we, the curious ones, retired into our little sitting-room to make our remarks on the new comers.

A little before the hour for the evening meal, No. 3 made her appearance. A pretty, fresh-looking girl she was, with an abundance of soft brown hair, which hung loosely in a net behind her head. She appeared to think us rather a formidable party, for she gave a little start back on first entering, as if surprised to see so many people. Perhaps that was the reason she immediately turned her back on us all, and commenced rummaging over the books on the bookshelves. It was not a very entertaining library. Most of the books had been left behind by travellers, and tracts formed the staple commodity, with here and there one of the Tauchnitz Editions, or a stray volume of a French novel. I am afraid it was one of the latter that our little friend took to study as she seated herself at the window; but I do not think she could have gained much harm from it, for whenever I looked up I could see her eyes wandering from one person to another of those in the room.

In every community there is always some one person who takes the lead. We should have felt quite at a loss without our Queen Bee. She was a widow who had brought up a large family; and now that the sons had gone out into the world, and that the daughters were married, she found herself an active woman of middle age, without any definite occupation. So, like many before her, she took to travelling, and found a little pleasant society in the mountain 'pensions.' When she went on to a new one, there were always a

few people quite ready to go with her, because they were sure the place would feel quite dull when she had left.

It was so pleasant to have some one to take all the trouble of settling an expedition or a walk; who, when conversation grew stagnant, would be sure to have a pleasant topic to start, or else a new game, or something enlivening to propose; and then it was no small advantage to have some one who did not mind, perhaps on the whole rather enjoyed, doing battle with the landlord on the subject of any public grievance.

It was our widow who generally broke the ice with the fresh arrivals, and on this occasion it was not long before she had asked some trifling question, to draw the 'brown-eyed lassie' into conversation. The answer was given with a frank open smile; it was the unmistakable look of one who belonged to a family where there was nothing to be concealed. In the course of a quarter of an hour, without any effort on our side, we seemed to know all the family history.

How Caroline settled everything, and always paid the bills; and how the men would jog mamma in the 'chaise-a-porteur,' and made her get out at the steepest parts, because they complained she was too heavy. And there was a brother Charlie, too, who had voted 'pensions' bores, but had gone on an expedition to Chamouni. Our little friend wanted to go there with him, but Caroline did not think it was proper. Caroline was evidently a great authority in her family. So we chatted on, until the great bell rang for tea, and when all went together to the dining-room.

We called this meal 'tea' because of the beverage we drank, but it really almost amounted to dinner, what with the hot and cold meats, delicate little pancakes, and stewed fruit. But the best thing on the table was the whipped cream, large basins of it, thick, and foamy; we found it a wonderful improvement to the wild strawberries and raspberries. About this said cream I have something to relate. One day when it came to be tasted there was a general look of disgust; something had gone wrong, and there was a most decided flavour of oil. How it got there was never discovered. Our host vowed that the milk came direct from the 'vacherie,' and madame, with equal certainty, and still more volubility, declared that it had never come in contact with anything but the cleanest of basins and spoons. So we were fain to be content to hide our grimaces, and take refuge in silence. However, for some evenings

after, there was a decided reluctance to be the first to try the cream, and those who had the courage to taste it with the tip of their tongues were considered public benefactors, and their verdict was telegraphed round the table. But we never, fortunately, had a repetition of the oily flavour.

After tea came a little wandering in the garden, gazing up at the stars; and we watched the terrestrial star of red light from the cigar of our Russian prince as he paced up and down the gravel walk. But our host has carried the old-fashioned lamp into the little sitting-room, and it shines so attractively that one by one we gather round it. We do not muster our full force of an evening, for there are always some who retire to their own rooms, either to mend stockings or other wearing apparel, perhaps to write a letter, or else to doze away the evening pretending to read.

On entering I found that Caroline was trying the piano, a wretched old kettledrum, very much out of tune. Most new comers made an attempt at playing on it at first, but very soon got disgusted with its squeaking, groaning sounds; so our musical performances were limited to choruses without accompaniment, which we sang very often in the open air, on our walks. The style of music, I confess, was not classical—Christy-minstrel songs being the general favourites.

Before the evening was half over some of the younger ones proposed a game of cards, which was unanimously agreed to; so the table was cleared of books and work, the chairs were drawn round, and a pack of cards produced. We had five centimes, that is halfpenny; points, just to keep up the interest, not that there was not plenty of interest, and of laugh-

ing also, without that, and soon we were all deeply engaged in the mysteries of Chow Chow. Old Bachelor followed; but on account of the great preponderance of ladies we called it Old Maid; and just as we were in the most exciting part, ten o'clock, our breaking-up time, struck.

By eleven there was silence through all the wooden mansion, a silence which was not broken until the morning sunbeams found their way through the closed shutters, and woke us up to another day of innocent and harmless pleasures.

Far be it from me to encourage the idea that all 'pensions' are in this—shall I call it pastoral?—style. I speak only of those in the out-of-the-way parts in the valleys, or on the mountain sides. But go to Lucerne, or to Interlachen—that town of boarding-houses, or even to the borders of the Lake of Geneva, and there you may live as gay and fashionable a life as at any watering-place.

But the spirit of the mountains is not there. From amidst the heat and hurry, through the dust raised by the multitude of human footsteps, you will often be tempted to raise your eyes in imagination, with a longing glance, to those hidden peaceful retreats where nature can be met and enjoyed face to face.

Still, it is only during a few summer months that we can live in these high regions, for winter begins early so near the boundary of perpetual ice, and then comes the change. The snow lays its white carpet over the grass we loved to baak on; the cattle, with their tinkling bells, are driven down below; and the last visitor descends the rough mountain path, to find the summer still lingering in the valleys and round the lakes.

ALPHA.



A SHY MAN'S DIFFICULTIES.



HE name that came with me into the world is Blusherly. The name which I received contemporaneously with the universal Christian rite was Charles Alfred. The three united, it will be perceived, run off euphoniouly as Charles Alfred Blusherly. For the last the law alone is accountable, which exacts that all children shall bear the name of their sires. The two former are to be set to the account of the then humour of my parents.

No doubt it will be assumed that here is some free, fearless, and even reckless nature—a wild, boisterous temperament, indiscreet it may be, but bold and eager, difficult to be restrained, and riding rough-shod over all obstacles. Ah, me! riding rough-shod, indeed! It were well if

it came to riding smooth-shod—or, indeed, riding at all. Am I not a shy man? and we shy men are brave enough upon paper. The gay rollicking key in which the overture to this piece is pitched, is no more than a poor sham, a hollow mockery, a sad make-believe. I am not free, nor rollicksome, nor frolicksome; I am miserably, hopelessly shy—consumed by that affection as by a disease.

In Dr. Goldsmith's play, Mr. Marlow, it will be recollected, in his interview with the barmaid, professed himself too coy to enter into any of the easy familiarities fashionable with gentlemen of his time. So acutely do I suffer from this horrid malady that, though well brought up and of severe morals, I am at times inclined to envy my less strait-laced and erring brethren in the practice of *such* easy familiarities at inns and other places. Repentant afterwards, I do for the moment admire the cool and smooth effrontery with which they can be affectionately rude to persons in that meaner order of life. I hope I shall not be misunderstood here, or thought to be sanctioning a course of practice highly free and reprehensible. I admire the power, but must at the same time turn away my eyes and condemn.

With me this weakness is, in a manner, constitutional; and betrays itself in mixed companies by violent flushings and conspicuous disorder and distress on being called, even unintentionally, into any notoriety—a sight, I am informed by friendly beholders, quite painful to those sitting or standing by. It must indeed be alarming for a large company pleasantly diverting itself harmlessly with light and indifferent topics, of a sudden to find a member of their society all blazing and flaming like an Italian sunset, and on the verge of strangulation from the sudden tightening of his necktie.

I feel that this phenomenon must naturally check the easy flow of conversation, and entail a needless publicity on the innocent. What I have suffered in this way, and the many times I have writhed in this agony, will not be known until the day of grand accounting—if, indeed there is to be a balance struck of *that* species of suffering.

Once there lived a maid, and the name, of the maid was Blowzier—Mary Blowzier; of Huguenot extraction—so I was told—and living down on the Thames at Tomata Villa. My father had known Mary Blowzier—my aunt had been admitted to intermarry in the halls of Blowzier père; and had quaffed the cup of joy on festive occasions. It had been a pleasant speculation in the bosom of our family to lay out an alliance between the houses of Blowzier and Blusherly—to make me, the unconscious Charles Alfred, take her, Mary Blowzier, to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold, &c., according to the formula. They even went further, and, by a bold poetic license, would raise up heirs male of the body for the combined house of Blusherly-Blowzier, and carve out for them prematurely other distinguished alliances. It was agreed, however, that when Charles Alfred came home, he should be forthwith equipped handsomely, like the young Gascons in M. Dumas' tales, setting out for Paris; and, dismissed with my father's blessing, should make, not for Paris, but for Tomata Villa on the Thames. Alone I was to do it. Alone I was to win the prize gloriously—alone I was to fail.

It was a lovely summer day when I set forth. The sun was high in the heavens, and I glistened in its rays in a suit of bright new raiment. I was at the station at twelve o'clock of this summer's day, waiting for the train, which set forth at half-past twelve precisely; and yet, bright and encouraging as was the day—though, without undue exaggeration of phrase, all nature might be said to be smiling—I, Blusherly, the subject of this memoir, was in a horrible state of mind—literally, *sans phrase*, in a horrible state of

mind. I have sat at a species of public entertainment where an electro-biological operator has drawn all eyes upon me, and made me feel faint and giddy by an invitation to walk up on the platform. Yet this was worse. I have waited in the dentist's parlour; I have present to my mind the moment when the door is thrown gently open, and the dentist's menial announces, that by special favour he will let me be tortured first. Yet this was worse. Presenting myself on a platform to a derisive populace, or being led away to region of pincers and screws and levers and files, and cotton, and perforated delph, are horrible positions for a human being; yet not so horrible as plunging without support, moral or physical, into the bosom of a strange family. I was about to plunge without support into the bosom of a strange family. I had passed a fearful night—full of nightmares, startings, and convulsive tremors; but to my story.

I carefully selected a carriage that was a perfect void, and likely to remain a void. I love privacy in these railway journeys. And the better to secure the carriage I had selected continuing a void, I artfully walked up and down the platform *without* taking my place, but keeping my eye carefully upon it. Let me not be misunderstood; nor let any prevarication be suspected here. I *had* taken my place, so far as securing it by a deposit of an umbrella may be said to amount to the taking of a place. No one came. The bell sounded; and with feelings of secret satisfaction I *mounted*, as the French say, and sat down secure in a first-class solitude.

Suddenly I heard a shuffle and pattering as of feet; and a flock of scared ladies, with some gentlemen, flew past the window laughing and simpering, and indeed all but late. They were seeking places, and could find none, and passed again amid the impatient and stimulating cries of porters and guards, infuriated by the delay. A miserable dependent of the establishment thrusting his coarse face in at my window, sees that there is room; and throwing open the door puts the whole party

—three ladies and two gentlemen—that is to say, three enormous masses of inflated summer muslins, rustling and fluttering, and filling up the whole carriage—an unpardonable, an unwarrantable intrusion, which filled me with confusion and alarm.

The situation was really serious. I was alone, and thus really imprisoned with these strangers, who were clearly of a lawless, wanton temperament—the ladies specially—and would respect nothing, either human or divine. I saw that at a glance; and if there be a thing of which I stand in awe in this whole world, it is a female of a lively and scoffing temperament. Here were three females of lively and scoffing temperament—three females in boisterous and unfeminine spirits, hounded on, if I may so phrase it, by the applause of their two servile male companions. In an instant I saw that I was at their mercy, and that when there came a dearth of subjects on which to spend their powers of ridicule, I should be the next victim selected.

We flew along through the green fields, with the sun still shining placidly; and still the unseemly merriment went forward. I had purchased a bright yellow volume of 'Railway Reading,' with which I affected to be wholly absorbed; but which to this moment, if duly empanelled on oath, I could not name the title. It was a wretched blind; and by its agency I heard all their talk—such sarcasm, such scourging from one damsel specially of robust health and really fair to look on, and who kept the rest in convulsions of obsequious laughter. Suddenly, in answer to a sort of mock-modest self-disparagement on the part of one of the male listeners, the young lady of robust health said, gaily—

'Come, Captain Mannerly, no one ever accused you of being shy!'

'Well, I am now,' pon word, am. No one believe it, though; but am doosid shy.'

'Particularly with ladies,' said the young lady in robust health; a sentiment endorsed with a roar of laughter in chorus that was positively unseemly. 'I have a great

piece of fun coming,' said the young lady in robust health; 'there is a shy creature to be sent down to see me some time this week, so I am told. A man—only think!—a real shy man! Ha, ha!'

Indecent Chorus.—'Ha, ha, ha!'

'They tell me,' the young lady in robust health went on, 'that he was actually born shy! ha, ha! just as you see infants born with strawberry marks—and that he blushed in his cradle. Ha, ha!'

Indecent Chorus (as before).—'Ha, ha, ha!'

'I am dying to see the wretch,' she went on. 'We shall have a great day's sport. I shall draw him out, you may be sure.'

'Public admitted?' Captain Mannerly asked, 'aw?'

'Yes—must admit a select circle, you know. I should so like to see you roast him!'

'The poor wretch! how we shall tar and feather—but no, I don't think I shall let you in. You will laugh and disgrace me,' said the young lady in robust health.

Here followed chorus, indecent as before—'No, no! 'deed we won't! Come, you must; such fun,' &c.

'And the creature's name?' said another of the young ladies; 'what is it called? where was it found? who found it?'

'I have all particulars,' said the young lady in robust health; 'Blush-erly or Blushington, or Blushman, or some such title.'

'Haw, haw!' again roared the dragoon. 'Good heavens! Now—now promise me you won't let them send it to you without letting me know. Promise me, now—do!'

'Shall we have a large double magnifying glass, and look at the thing by turns? Ha, ha!' (This came from another of these charitable young persons.)

For myself—all this while I was growing ill. I was becoming sick to death. My forehead had broken out into cold dew. At every fresh coarse insinuation I could feel rushes of blood making straight for my ears. My cheeks were bathed in blood. My forehead was bathed in—no matter, let it pass. But still I read on—read on desperately, and

never lifted my eyes for one second. I wonder did the unfeeling crew take note of my flaming ear-tips glowing like hot embers. In the dark they would have looked fiery, like the ends of lighted cigars. These were my sufferings at that terrible moment.

The natural impulse would have been to have, as it were, taken the bull by the horns at the outset, and boldly proclaimed my style and titles, when it was to be seen that the tendency of the conversation was about to be personal and disparaging. But unhappily I was a shy man. Another pardonable impulse would have been, when the conversation had pronounced itself as decidedly personal and disparaging, not to have taken the bull by the horns—which kine was not present—but to have taken the insolent dragoon by the throat, who actually *was* present. But here again I was a shy man. The act of throwing off my disguise, in a Rhoderick Dhu fashion, before such a company, would have killed me.

Presently, to my unspeakable relief, the young lady in robust health diverted the conversation into another channel, making sport of some other wretched victim, and I began to breathe again. After all, it was a trial, a heavy blow and deep discouragement; but still it might have been worse. I was an unknown quantity, a bird of passage whom they should never see again. As for *her*—no matter; there was a train at one thirty-five, ten minutes after the arrival of our own, and by that should I return. Here was a station now which would possibly relieve me of the whole party. At least, I could change carriages; find a place in a more sanitary neighbourhood; but again, I was a shy man, and should have to pass between two rows to reach the door.

As the train was stopping, I saw relief at hand in the shape of my friend Whilkers' familiar head gliding by, looking out for some object. I was glad to see Whilkers' familiar head: among these wild social Otsehtans it would be some protection. The familiar face had seen me too, for I saw it moving to keep

up with the carriage. Here it was, now looking in at the carriage window, and interchanging hearty salutation with—the young person in robust health! I had not been seen.

'Good gracious me,' said the young person in robust health, 'are you coming in, Mr. Whilkers?—lots of room.'

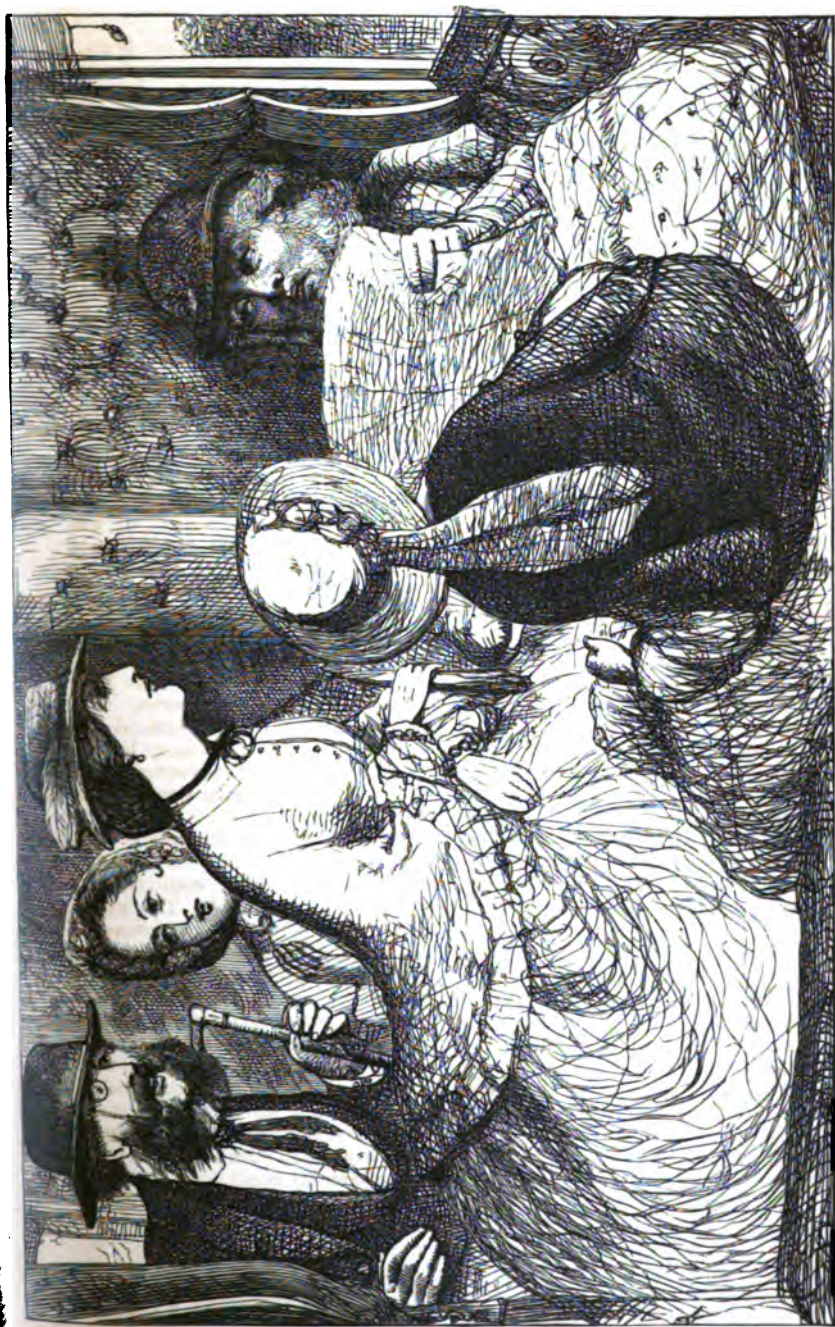
'Was just going down to pay you a visit,' said Whilkers, entering. 'Hallo!' he added, seeing me then first, 'are you there? How d'ye do, old fellow?'

Though thus publicly addressed, I was not very much thrown out. The shocks of the last few minutes had hardened me to anything. Neither did I see, through some obtuseness (*quem Deus*, &c.), the terrible precipice on which I was standing. So I said to Whilkers that I was quite well, thank him, and fell back into my railway volume. But by-and-by it came. Whilkers is a man of what are called easy manners. He can talk without any grist, and can bake without flour, and only barm. And so, busy with our mutual friend Billington's coming marriage, he appealed to me for the young lady's name whom Billington was about to wed.

'Who is it, eh, BLUSHINGLY? You should know.'

There was much confusion, as may be well imagined. The guilty beings round me were disordered in their turn. I saw them interchange glances of shame, and possibly contrition; all save, indeed, that abandoned young person in robust health, who had got her handkerchief to her mouth, I am afraid, struggling with suppressed laughter. For myself, I was strangely calm; and, for a shy man, wonderfully self-possessed. But it was the calmness of despair. No doubt my heart, and those significant bursts of blood to the cheeks and extremities of the ears—but I was very calm, on the whole.

My friend Whilkers, on this sudden pause and confusion, looked from one to the other in amazement. He could not comprehend the blank, the consternation that had fallen on the company. He saw them look-



Drawn by C. A. Doyle.]

A SHY MAN'S DIFFICULTIES.

[See the Story.

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ing at me doubtless with some strange expression, for he said, 'By the way, I had forgot. I thought you knew each other. Let me introduce my friend Blusherly. I believe,' adds Whilkers, knowingly, 'my friend Blusherly meant to contrive this acquaintance for himself some day this week, and perhaps I have spoiled his pleasure.'

More confusion; the young person of robust health suffocating with laughter—I again crimsoning with shame. As I think of the heartless jests that will follow, at my expense, my heart sinks; I know not where to look; I am ashamed to lift my head; I am hot, from my toes upwards—raging white heat. My friend Whilkers, from sheer puzzle, has become silent. We are all silent.

A station, a lonely station, where no one was to get out or get in—a blessed relief and deliverance. Though a shy man, I got up to descend.

'Why on earth do you get out here?' said Whilkers; 'who *can* you want to see here?'

With a ghastly smile I murmured something about friends waiting, and tore myself from his clutch, somewhat rudely, I must confess. The next instant I was on the ground—free. I saw them all straining to look after me, in undisguised bursts of vulgar merriment. Low creatures! I was free. But I had to wait until the evening, and saw train after train go by; for this was a lonely, unfrequented station, with but small traffic. I shall not soon forget that day of suffering. Why is it that fate heaps these trials on natures the worst calculated in the world to bear them?

II.

Yet another scene from these tribulations of a shy man. One feature in the inevitable destiny of shy men has been already noted—that they are, as it were, specially marked out for suffering and social degradation. The observing student of life and manners cannot fail to have taken notice of this phenomenon: how the ordinary, being distinguished in no respect for brilliancy

of parts or intellect—nay, rather positively deficient in these qualities—seem to flounder heavily through life, with perfect satisfaction, and without attracting any painful notoriety; how the brazen and the foolish are happily exempted from all social pitfalls and *cui de sacre*, or who, if they *do* chance to stumble into such, do so without any glaring conspicuousness, and are assisted out humanely. But if the shy man should unhappily trip, the whole world looks round, and shrieks with amusement, relishing it as a trifle. An indifferent little accident, harmless in another, becomes in him food for inextinguishable laughter. We may go further, and say, that such casualties do somehow perversely fall only on the heads of shy men. A mysterious law seems somehow to nicely direct misfortune in that one direction. This phenomenon, illustrative of a too partial distribution of the casualties of life, as well as of the uncharitableness of our common nature, cannot have escaped the observant mind.

When, too, the shy man, driven to desperation, would make an effort, and cast away this burden which weighs him down, and triumphing over this fatal curse would stand forward on equal terms with his fellow men, it seems to be another fatal law of his destiny that this praiseworthy effort should only bring him worse confusion. Either his poor pretence is at once seen through, and he is dealt with summarily, as a shy man in a brazen man's clothing, which may be indeed but a just retribution; or else he plays his part so clumsily that he is detected forthwith. For a shy man, *quid* shy man, there may be some merciful consideration, considering that he is what he is, and cannot help so being; but for a shy man, who is not only shy man, but impostor also, there can be no extenuation.

A second short apologue, drawn from my own experience, may be of use in illustrating the sorrows to which this unhappy class is subject.

Once we were living at the aquatic suburb of Richmond, and the tone of that neighbourhood being emi-

nently tranquil—tame, slow, stupid, were the phrases that rough spirits of the outer world applied to it—I somehow found myself becoming more reconciled to human nature. It was a sort of pastoral country, and the community in which I moved were more or less leavened with pastoral feelings; and though I believe I was really the only shy—retiring, I should say—man in the place, still no one rudely made sport of my infirmity: nay, I received such soothing treatment, such hopeful encouragement, that really I began to grow bold and assured, and even forward; and at last began to speculate whether it might not have been, after all, a sort of delusion—that I had been standing all this while in my own light, as it were; and to consider whether I was not by nature a rather forward, pushing, impudent person. I found myself, to my perfect amazement, talking loudly in a crowded room, and taking little pardonable liberties, justified by the laws of the drawing-room. It is but fair, at the same time, to add, that I was about the only available male person in the district, available, that is, for practicable social uses: and it should be mentioned, that the female pastures over which I strayed were of a serious semi-theological tone. This may account for that curious change I found in myself about this time.

All would have gone well but for the advent, early in the summer, of a strange, irregular family, with whom we had some London acquaintance, and who had come down for health and the aquatics—a proceeding rational indeed so far, and not to be objected to on serious grounds. It is lawful to seek health in conjunction with the aquatics, without let or impediment, and yet this apparently innocuous movement was fraught with fatal consequences to me. When I heard that the Shakerlys—mother, daughter Julia, and two roaring, noisy sons, Horace and John—were coming, I felt a cold presentiment, as of coming misfortune, creep slowly over me. And when people stopped me in the open highways, with the glad tidings that 'the Shakerlys had come'

(poor thoughtful souls! why should *they* be glad?), I gave a ghastly smile, and staggered under the blow. Some little time I had hoped for to be ready for the stroke, but I was scarcely prepared for this so soon. No matter: and as I walked up the hill to take one more look at that famous Thames view (I was almost adding, for the last time, but I did not meditate suicide), the horrid thought filled me that I was being strangely altered as I walked, and that, by a mysterious change, I was becoming a shy man again!

The mother of the Shakerlys was a London mother—a mother of parties, of routs, the common mother of all young men—like our bounteous mother earth; in short, the traditional fashionable parent. The Shakerly youths, Horace and John, were rude, noisy, blatant, coarse-minded fellows—persons that said what they thought, and did what they pleased; in short (I hope I shall be pardoned the expression), perfect *beasts*. I know this word to be coarse, but it is an exact description. *Beasts* they were. They had loud laughs, revolting cachinnations that jarred on you and made you start. They said what they called good things, and were always busy with an entertainment they called chaffing. From the moment they came I felt that in figurative, though scarcely accurate language, the peace of the valley was fled; Richmond, not strictly speaking, lying in a valley.

I never met such coarse minds, such rude unmitigated fashion of calling a spade a spade—such freedom of manners, such daily outraging of the ordinary decencies of society. And yet these men, Horace and John, were popular—absolutely popular. People were glad to have them at their houses, and encouraged them in their odious tricks. At times, indeed, I could envy them—envy them, with all their faults! As it was, they shoved me from my little throne, when the usual portion of fallen royalty, utter neglect, became my portion. But I did not complain; and would have looked on without repining, bearing my disgrace with the dignity which

makes adversity respectable, had I not begun to mark with feelings of alarm, that these odious men were beginning to turn their looks in my direction. They had exhausted all the facetious matter of the district, and began to cast hungry eyes upon me.

One fatal night the Shakerlys gave a party, and on that fatal night to their party did I repair. All through the day curious forebodings whispered that it would be better to stay away; but some horrid fascination drew me on to the edge of the precipice. Nay, at one time it had actually been arranged that I should go into London for the night, on special business; but towards four o'clock, by some mysterious interposition, it was put off until another day; and there was now no excuse for not going to the Shakerly saturnalia. In this I clearly recognised the hand of destiny, and ceased any longer to struggle with my fate.

It came. I entered the chamber, and as I stepped across the threshold, felt a *frisson* of horror. It was one of those licentious scenes of riot and revelry which but too often disgraced this Shakerly mansion, and which, under the thin disguise of 'small plays' as they are called, gave occasion for revolting displays of animal spirits. Here cotillions, and such 'satyric' dances raged, far prolonged into the night, and I used to blush to see young virgins of known virtue and good reputation bursting with hysterical laughter, and actually romping—plainly, unmistakably romping—running round with hands, 'threading the needle' as it was called, in company with fauns and satyrs. These two youths had literally demoralized the country, once the seat of innocence and virtue.

When I entered the carnival was at its height. Miss Julia Shakerly—a terrible young person, that would take the grand Ilama by his beard without hesitation—I always stood in especial awe of. I shrank from her. To-night she was the soul of the revel. I heard her voice rise above them all. She was laying out the order of the sports and pastimes of

the night, surrounded by a ring of noisy satyrs in tail-coats. I cannot recal having ever seen so unfeminine a spectacle. Ah! woe is me that I ever entered that dreadful place!

I would have no share in their profane rites. They had but asked me with a monstrous mendacity—a cloak for what was to follow—'to take a cup of tea.' Miserable pretence! which I should have seen through. I got no tea. There was not even the poor sham of cups and saucers. I sank into a corner and attached myself to a safe and serious dowager of goodly proportions, and with her bewailed the decay of good manners and morals, which is one of the features of our remarkable age.

I was busy in this pleasing intercourse, when I could not but take notice that many eyes were being bent upon me in a peculiarly significant manner, accompanied with a certain secret tittering. I blushed and grew warm, as I always do at any undue amount of notice; and grew warmer still when I saw that damsel, Miss Julia—whom I never yet saw grow warm or pink—coming towards my retreat, supported by one of her odious relations. What fell purpose could they have in view? Alas! I should know presently.

Strange, she spoke in very sweet and limpid accents. 'Mr. Blush-erly,' she said, demurely, 'we are about to play "The Seat of Mahomet," a new game just come out, and very fashionable, and you must join.'

Behind her came a sort of deputation of wild, disorderly satyrs, who respected neither age nor sex. What could this betide? and yet she was so soft and gentle!

In faltering accents, I murmured, 'that I did not know the principles that regulated the Seat of Mahomet, and that I could never hope to learn them—and that—that—' Here seeing everybody listening and smiling, I felt much agitated and could not finish. It was a horrible state of publicity.

'You *must* play,' she went on; 'I am queen here, and I order you. I shall teach you myself. Come!'

Here two forward satyrs inso-
lently took me by the arms, and led
me into the middle to where a chair,
known, for the purpose of the game,
as the Seat of Mahomet, was placed.
I felt horribly during this degrada-
tion. I did not know how to
behave, but took refuge in what I
fear must have been neither more
nor less than an inane grin. Un-
resisting, and utterly enfeebled in

mind and body, I was placed in the
chair which was known as the Seat
of Mahomet, and the conspirators
gathered round in a circle. At that
moment I saw distinctly, as in a
magic mirror, all the horrors that
were to come, and yet felt helpless
as a child.

The principle of Mahomet's Seat
was then briefly explained by one of
the young Indians there present.



It seems it was actually invented by
Miss Julia Shakerly herself as a
sort of scientific exercise, and was
considered a highly ingenious thing.
It was held to be very instructive
and improving as a physiognomical
training, and was played somewhat
in this wise—

I was placed on Mahomet's chair,
as just mentioned (why the pro-

phet was selected was not made
plain). Miss Julia stood beside me,
and, I was told, bore the temporary
designation of the Priestess. For
this arbitrary appellation no reason
was given either. All the populace
were then gathered into a crowd at
one end of the room (and a very
disorderly crowd they were), all
giggling, laughing, and obstrepe-

rously noisy. A horrid feeling began to take possession of me, that the whole was a deep-laid scheme, against me especially. But I sat on, smiling spasmodically.

It began. The rite was something in this wise:—One by one the company were led up, under the guidance of the Priestess, and placed before me: beginning with the youth Horace. Insolently he pryed and peered into my face—even taking hold of the more prominent features; and when I faintly deprecated this familiarity, and made as though I would rise, I was pushed back with indignity into my seat, and told 'it was the game.' Having surveyed me thus attentively, he whispered something in the Priestess' ear, which was received with an explosion of merriment and forthwith written down on a piece of paper. I could well imagine it was some disparaging criticism. Then came another, then another—all apparently, from the gradually intensifying merriment, growing more and more personal. And so the horrid torture went on until all had finished. Then Miss Julia proceeded to read out what she called my 'Phrenological development,' collected from the various opinions. What I went through during this portion of the ceremony will never be effaced from my mind. I wonder my hair did not turn white that night: as it was, beads of dew stood upon my forehead.

Priestess reads:—

'Phrenological development of C. Blusherly, Esq.

1. 'An out-and-out muff.'
2. 'A very mild youth.'
3. 'No brains.'
4. 'Reared on asses' milk.'
5. 'Would not harm a fly.'
6. 'Tame as a cat.'
7. 'Very soft indeed.'
8. 'Not to be trusted without a keeper.'

9. 'Fond of nurse.'

During the recital of these personalities, each of which was received with a scream of delight, I thought I should have died. I still continued to grin a ghastly smile, and when she had done, rose with

the secret purpose of rushing wildly at the door. But rude hands caught me by the shoulders and forced me back again, assuring me that 'the game was not half over yet.'

'Dear me, no, Mr. Blusherly,' the Priestess said, suffocating with laughter (six months in an asylum or house of correction would have done her a world of good), 'the fun is all to come as yet.'

This was the fun that came.

'Now,' said she, 'I am to ask you some questions, and you are to answer. That is the rule of the game. You are on your trial. I am the judge, and here is the jury.'

I to answer questions! more tribulation heaped on this wretched head!

'Now,' she went on, reading out, 'I find that some wicked person has said that you are "an out-and-out muff." Do you admit or deny the charge?'

With a feeble smile I murmured something mechanically to the effect of 'of course not.'

A voice from the crowd called out rudely, 'Speak up!'

'Of course not,' she said; 'we all know that; ha, ha! Well, as you say Not Guilty, you must prove your case. How do you show you are not an "out-and-out muff"?'

This was the fun alluded to. I was badgered, cross-examined, insulted, trod upon, bruised (morally, of course), until in about three quarters of an hour's time I was all but ripe for an asylum. I was made to show that I had not 'been reared on asses' milk,' in the 'words of my plea,' as a young barrister of the company put it. My head was felt over, to see if it was a conformation indicative of brains. And finally the case was sent to the jury, and a verdict taken—which was to the effect that I had not 'made out my plea.' I was too agitated at the time to notice that ingenious perversion of legal practice which threw the burden of proof on me. But let that pass. I proved nothing—attempted nothing—did nothing. Several times I was on the verge of fainting. Finally, when they had exhausted all the arts that their

malice could suggest, I was set free—more from weariness in their game than from any feeling of compassion for their victim. I fled from the house, and arrived at the paternal mansion quite wild and dazed, and slightly bordering on the verge of idiocy. They told me I spoke incoherently on questions being put to me. From that hour I remained a hopeless, incurable shy man.

III.

I have yet a third experience. An interval of years is supposed to have elapsed between this act and the last. Some years had passed over my head, and brought with them, possibly, wisdom and additional shyness. I was a wiser and a better—and a shyer—man. The scene, too, is changed to a retired watering-place, slightly decadent, and growing unfashionable, and not likely to be visited by the rude blasts of railery and what is vulgarly called 'chaff'—a sequestered vale, as it were, tinged with tea and seriousness. I was comparatively happy there. I was treated gently and considerately; and the shrinking and retiring nature with which I had been endowed was not likely to be exposed to those cruel tests which had really shattered the whole system, and made me subject to fits of timidity like fits of epilepsy. It was stupid, yet healthful; it was dull, yet decent and sober.

So it continued until that fate or destiny, which is peculiarly hostile to shy men, brought into the neighbourhood a wandering showman, who took the Rooms, and placarded the dead walls copiously with his announcements. When I say a showman, I mean he was an electrobiologist—a gentleman who lectured on that science, and 'illustrated it with living examples.' It was proposed that the aristocracy of the place should patronize the show; but with a strange instinct in these matters, which never deceives me, I hung back. I was suspicious of those words 'living examples,' which in themselves contained a warning. But I was seduced into going. There was a charming girl mixed up in the

business (a charming girl whom I fancied was about eventually to become Mrs. Blusherly; but that is a separate history, and neither here nor there—*there*, if either of the two); and the charming girl was anxious I should attend on her (of course in the society of her parent) to the scene of entertainment. I begin to suspect now that the charming girl had no other escort; but that, too, is neither here nor there.

In the evening we repaired to the entertainment—the charming girl, her mamma, and I. The Rooms were full, and on going in, the gentleman who gave the tickets gave us also vouchers and numbers, bidding us take great care of the same. The object of this arrangement was, handsomely to give us all a chance of some 'valuable prizes,' which, as the bills informed us, were to be given away that night. We accordingly took care of our numbers and vouchers, and those of the charming girl and her mamma were given to me to keep.

The operator made his appearance, gave the usual prefatory remarks, and finally begged that a number of gentlemen would 'favour him' by stepping up on the platform. Some half a dozen were with difficulty wheedled up from their places and arranged in constrained attitudes on chairs. Still there were scarcely sufficient, and the operator looked wistfully round for more. I saw his eye settle with a longing expression on me. I could imagine that he thought my peculiar organization admirably adapted for his nefarious ends; and at the bare notion I felt my face glowing and flushing in a raging spasmodic fashion. Gracious! he was speaking—actually addressing me—pointedly, individually, before the whole company!

'Will you, sir? Would you favour me, sir—oblige the audience? would you step up?'

In a drawing-room—in the open air—it is well enough, or rather ill enough; I can endure it. But being thus interpellated before the public! My tongue clove to my mouth. I *could* not answer, and took refuge in a dogged silence. The charming

girl looked at me wondering. *Now*, I believe she was anxious I should exhibit myself in this ridiculous light. It seems to me that every one wishes *me* to furnish them with food for laughter. But let *that* pass.

I remained stolidly immovable, insensible. Possibly the operator thought me deaf. I never answered him or appeared to hear him. There was wisdom after all in this foolishness. He desisted at last, and I was left in peace.

He began his tricks—his incantations, I mean. The half a dozen men were set to work at to stare at small zinc discs, and at the end of a suitable time five were discovered to be in exactly the same condition as at starting, and were 'cast' as unfit for the service. Remained only one who showed symptoms of somnolency, admirably pronounced. Him I suspect to have been a salaried 'living example;' but let that pass too. He did the usual surprising feats—danced, sang, played, made speeches, got drunk, got angry, squared at his employer—I mean the operator, and exhibited the regulation surprise when brought back to the ordinary world, on his emp—the operator saying it was 'all right.' Then came the 'giving away' of the 'prizes.'

There were clocks, jars, a stray silver watch or two, and a profusion of doubtful guard-chains. The numbers were drawn in a sort of lottery; and I felt a little excited as I thought of the possibility of a winning number being mine, when suddenly, on a successful one being proclaimed, I saw the holder rise from his seat, and amid applause walk up a long lane to receive his prize, with every eye turned on him in envy or admiration. This frightful ordeal I never could endure—never, never; and I actually trembled in my seat as I thought of the bare possibility—the horrible piece of luck—of a prize falling to me.

Happily all passed by; all were nearly drawn, save a really pretty French pendule, purposely kept for the last, as the most valuable. He drew out the number. I scarcely breathed.

'Five hundred and sixty.'

Not mine, thank heaven! I was safe. But there was a little scream of delight beside me.

'My number!' said the charming girl. 'My number; do you hear? How delightful! how nice! Where is it? quick! Go up and get it.'

'Any claimant for number five hundred and sixty?' said the operator, looking round.

'Quick!' said the charming girl, 'go up for it; he is waiting.'

Go up for it, with all those eyes bent on me—not for millions. It was not a question of mere will, the power was wanting. I *could* not have stirred. I smiled, I am afraid feebly.

'When did you hear from your sister?' I said, attempting to give a turn to the conversation.

'If no one claims this beautiful article,' said the operator, 'we must pass it, and keep it for another night.'

'Do you hear?' said the charming girl, very impatiently; 'go up, *do*. I shall lose my clock. Where is the number?'

'Where?' I said, wildly. Ah, blessed thought! 'I am afraid,' I continued, feeling my pockets, 'that I have—really—I am afraid it is lost. Are you sure you gave it to me?'

The charming girl *looked* at me. I think she could not trust herself to speak; and the parent of the charming girl murmured something that in the distance had a sound akin to 'stupid.'

'Then,' said the operator, 'there being no claimant for this beautiful and truly chaste article, it shall be reserved for the next evening, when we hope, ladies and gentlemen, to have the pleasure,' &c.

'Yes,' said I, still feeling my pockets, 'I am really afraid I have lost it.'

The charming girl said not a word. Whether I had or had not lost the number matters not now; but at that time something else was lost too—the charming girl herself, who ever after could scarcely speak to me with civility.

And so to this day I remain a shy man—indeed, I may say, the shyest of shy men.

P. F.

HOPE !

COME to the woods with me, love,
 Come where the sweet birds sing;
 Come to the woods with me, love,
 And watch the wild flowers spring.
 What though our hearts be sorrowful,
 The care shall pass away:
 The darkest hour of night, love,
 Is that before the day.

Why shouldst thou weep to see, love,
 That all bright things must fade?
 Think how, when autumn's glorious tints
 Deck forth the forest glade,
 It is fairer than e'en in the joyous spring,
 Or the noon of the summer's day.
 Ah, wherefore should we weep, to think
 Youth's dreams must pass away!

And when dark winter's storms, love,
 Shall sweep the forest bare,
 Ere the last leaf can leave the stem,
 Fresh leaves are budding there:
 So, in the sorely stricken heart,
 Whilst cherished hopes decay,
 New hopes are springing forth to life,
 Ere those have passed away.

List to that mystic harp, love,
 The wild winds make their own;
 Still to the voice of the passing breeze
 It yields an answering tone:
 Hark! as the wailing notes
 So sadly fall—to die!
 The thrilling strings pour forth again
 Still sweeter harmony!

Come to the woods with me, love;
 Come with a spirit light:
 Hear the rejoicing song of birds,
 Gaze on the waters bright.
 Let not your heart be sorrowful;
 Drive grief and care away:
 Think how the darkest, longest night
 Is followed by the day!

AUTUMN IN THE CANADIAN WOODS.



SHOOTING in Canada is a very different affair from shooting at home. There are no preserves, and game is thinly scattered over an immense tract of country. Hence, although a man may occasionally get a good day's snipe, woodcock, or duck shooting, he can seldom get that certainty of a fair day's sport for a hard day's work that can generally be made sure of in England; so that if a sportsman finds himself quartered in Canada, after a grill in the West Indies, his best plan is to make an expedition to the woods, where the novelty of the life, the beauty of the scenery, and the size of the game, will more than make up for the fewer head that he brings home.

I had, like most men similarly situated, taken a turn after the moose in the winter, and now, in the autumn of 185-, I determined to try my luck when there was no snow on the ground. As there is no preserving, there are of course

no keepers, and a start for the woods involves something more than a mere order for keepers and dogs to be ready at nine the next morning.

First, there is the important consideration of who is to be your companion; and when you are to be thrown almost entirely upon each other for society for thirty days or more, it is nearly as bad as choosing a wife. None but a man who likes to rough it, and to meet difficulties for the pleasure of overcoming them, ought to go an inch beyond civilization. Don't take a selfish fellow, and don't take one who agrees to everything you say; there is at times monotony enough without that. As you can't take books enough to read, take some one who has read a good deal, and remembers what he has read; you will often find a quiet, reading sort of fellow, with apparently no go in him at home, the best in the woods. Pick, in short, a companionable

man, and make up your minds, both of you, to give and take before you start. Having found your companion, you must next select your ground and your men. The former is generally consequent upon your choice of the latter, for few men could guide you equally well in different parts of the country. Indians are generally chosen, but in this case I engaged some Irish settlers, living 'convenient,' as they said, to our ground, and had no occasion to repent my choice. Next lay in your stock of provisions, and that requires some little care, let me tell you—it is a different affair from a paper of sandwiches and a flask of sherry. A hundredweight of captains' biscuits, half a hundredweight of salt pork, split peas, rice, sugar, tea and coffee, tobacco, salt, mustard and pepper; a bag of onions and one of flour, a keg of whiskey, powder and shot, axes and blankets, and a change of clothes, —these together will be a pretty good load for your party of four, we will say, yourselves and guides. These are the preliminaries which we will suppose I have settled satisfactorily to myself, and am now ready for a start to the head waters of the St. John's River, where it divides Canada from the States.

I had been casting about as to whom I should get as a companion, when it was settled for me by the arrival of an old friend, whose regiment was quartered at Jamaica, and who declared that a trip to the woods was the very thing to restore a digestion impaired, he feared irretrievably, by a tropical climate. I ought to say that there were plenty of congenial spirits in the gallant old corps, but it so happened that the races were coming off, and that our horse, 'Frazer,' was matched against an old antagonist, who, in fresh hands, was heavily backed to beat him the best three out of five mile heats, over the Quebec race-course, on the Plains of Abraham. I loved the woods more than the turf, and so, I was glad to find, did my friend Frank; and so leaving the racing men to keep up the credit of the corps, we started one fine afternoon for our destination.

'The Doctor' (so called because he once drove a doctor's carriage), now the leading livery-stable keeper and horse dealer at Quebec, and purveyor of horses to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales and suite, during their late Canadian tour, supplied us with a good pair of horses and a stout waggon, into which we had some difficulty to pack all our provender, selves, and baggage, besides a lad to drive it back again. After safely steering our heavy load down Mountain Street on to the quay, and from the quay on board one of the steamers which ply between Quebec and Point Levi, and driving up the steep hill on that side, we reached the table land of the southern shore, and taking the route up the valley of the Etchemin, we drove merrily on, passing the comfortable homesteads of the most contented people in the world, the French Canadians; the pretty whitewashed cottages, backed by the deep green of the firs and the glorious scarlet and yellow of the sugar maple, now in all its pride of colour. The last loads of the harvest were being carried home, and all looked happy and joyous, as if they had indeed reason to be contented with their lot. On now through the pretty villages, where the churches with their tinned roofs reflected the deep crimson rays of the setting sun—the priest's house adjoining the church, and looking more polished, bright, and comfortable than any other, as I have no doubt it was, mon Père himself looking happy and gentlemanly, as the French Canadian priests usually are, and enjoying his pipe by the side of his hop-covered porch. On to our stopping-place at St. Claire, where we found a portly host ready to receive us. He looked like an English Boniface, but repudiated the idea of belonging to so circumscribed a nationality; he was, he told us in answer to our question of where he came from, not an Englishman, but a cosmopolite, or, as he was good enough to explain, 'a citizen of the world.' The usual meal of meat and tea, eggs and bacon, having rapidly disappeared, Frank's 'impaired digestion' having

apparently been roused from a state of torpor during a course of severe jolting for the last hour of our journey, we lighted our pipes, and tried to get our cosmopolitan landlord to be communicative over a glass of grog: his appearance, however, belied him, and we came to the conclusion that portliness is not always to be connected with laughter and good-humour. He was a shocking radical, and we thought it highly probable that our 'citizen of the world' was a bad style of Yankee, and so we turned in early to be ready for a good start next morning.

We bade our 'citizen' a willing good-bye, after lumpy beds and a bad breakfast, and were once more *en route* over the roads of which our last hour's drive had given us a specimen the evening before—and they got worse and worse instead of better—over the hills and through the swamps till after a six-hours' drive we got over some twenty-five miles, and arrived at Standon, our guide's village, and the last settlement on our line.

Here we found him busily engaged putting the canoe to rights, and hurrying over some of his farm work before making a start. We set to and gave him a hand, so that all was ready for the next morning. His log hut was a comfortable one, his wife a tidy woman, who produced her best, and made such excellent potato-cakes, that I entertained the most serious fears for Frank's impaired organs, from the quantity he would stow away. I suppose the purity of the atmosphere prevented their having any ill effects.

In the evening visitor after visitor dropped in, nominally to wish Rob (our guide) good-bye, really to have a look at us. They were all Irish, and stanch Orangemen; in fact, it was an Orange settlement, not at all inclined to liberal views, and quite under the impression that their neighbours over the way, who were highly papistical, would exterminate them all if they could. Late hours are not fashionable in these parts, so nine o'clock found us taking our last night between the sheets for some time to come.

Hearing Rob stirring early, we turned out, and finding a glorious spring close to the house, performed our ablutions, assisted by a sharp hoar frost, in a highly refreshing and invigorating manner. After packing the canoe on a cart, and our baggage into three bundles for carrying when the cart could go no further, we started for Lake Etchemin, along what was once intended for a road. It was just twelve miles off, and as there were no settlers' farms or anything, in fact, but forest on the way, we were surprised to find that a broad road and bridges over the streams had existed, but which were now broken down as to the bridges, and broken up as to the roads. All, however, was explained on reaching Lake Etchemin, where we found a handsome house with a good clearing round it, several boats on the lake, and an air of pretension contrasting strongly with the usual log hut. It appears that a certain commissary-general had pitched upon this place for his retirement, had built a good house, cut a road, and made bridges, either at his own or at government expense—which, deponent could not say, but opined the latter—and then found that it was rather too far away for comfort; that making morning calls and going to market at Quebec over sixty miles of roughish roads, was *un peu trop fort*, and that, however jolly woods and lakes and retirement were in theory, they were not all one wanted in practice; and so the house on Lake Etchemin was let off for next to nothing to a somewhat dirty Irishman, a very dirty wife, and some equally dirty children and pigs. However, they were kind and hospitable, and perhaps we should not wash and dress ourselves quite so often as we do now if we lived away in the woods, and did all the work ourselves.

This was as far as the cart could go, so we launched the canoe, and to our horror discovered she leaked! As we were to live in her, at least during the day, for the next month, this was a serious matter; but we had brought some rosin in case of accidents, and so we 'rosined the

bow,' and made her water-tight *pro tem*.

Alas! I had to do the like many a time after, to my sorrow.

All aboard we got, and paddled about three miles to the end of the lake: by this time it was getting dark, so we determined to settle for the night, as we found an old camp handy. It was made simply of two stout poles stuck in the ground with another across them, against which leaned some old planks, apparently brought from a saw-mill attached to the house on the lake. Fancy yourself in an attic cut down the middle, and you have an idea of the usual shelter or camp.

A quantity of young fir branches spread on the ground make a pleasant, fresh-smelling couch, over which to throw your blanket; there is wood in quantities for a roaring fire, then get out your camp-kettle and make tea. A couple of hard biscuits and a bit of fried pork seem delicious after a longish day's work—at least for one's first day. Our tea, without milk, is strong, sweet, and refreshing; then pipes out, smoke, and rolled up in our blankets, we go to sleep pretty soon after the sun goes to bed.

As soon as the sun found his way through the dense foliage of firs we were all astir for our first real day in the woods; as yet we had only been on our way to them. Making up our fire, we soon had some good tea, pork and biscuit, the same as for our dinner the evening before, and packing our loads commenced our journey. Robert carried the canoe, whilst Frank, John Home (our second guide), and I, each carried a bundle some eighty pounds in weight. This might be no great matter on a hard road, but in the woods, which were generally swampy, with here and there a fallen tree across our path, or a half-concealed rock or stump, it was not so easy. However, we jogged along as well as we could, halting every hour for a draw of the pipe, from eight till four, getting over some ten miles, when we were brought to a stand-still by an apparently impassable mass of timber. It was what is called in Canada a windfall, or

the track of a tornado, in this instance about a quarter of a mile broad, and extending several miles on either side of our line. Every tree was levelled with the ground; from the giant pine on the hill-side to the tough tamarack of the swamp, none had been able to withstand the vast power in its onward path. All intertwined and interlaced they lay, absolutely forbidding the road. Rob, however, knew that a quarter of a mile further on ran a little stream, on the banks of which he proposed to camp for the night; so leaving our loads behind us, excepting a blanket each, and the camp-kettle, and something to eat, we set to work with the axes, and by cutting here and turning there, now under the stem of one prostrate giant, and again over the trunk of another, we managed, after a couple of hours' work, to get through this stockade of the Titans. Thoroughly tired we were when the murmur of the stream broke on our ears, and we came to the other side of the windfall. It left off as suddenly as it had begun; the Storm King had cut his path as clearly as a mower sweeps down the grass. Pulling a few branches of the fir, and spreading them on the ground, we were only too glad to dispense with the trouble of raising a shelter. There was plenty of good timber, and so with a fire at our feet, and a glorious deep-blue sky above our heads, our pipes and blankets encouraging the drowsy feeling, we dropped off hungrily to sleep; for after our hard day's work we had been obliged to be content with tea and biscuits for dinner, the pork being the other side of the windfall, and not get-at-able under a couple of hours' scramble. I suppose hunger and the morning cold roused us earlier than usual, for we found ourselves coaxing the embers into a blaze by daylight and were afoot soon after. Our first job was to bring the canoe, which took us all to manage, through the windfall; next our loads, and then we got some breakfast, packed up and crossed the stream, and finding the track somewhat firmer on the other side, pushed on and reached our

intended ground, the banks of the St. John, before noon. Here, to our surprise, we found another canoe drawn up, so some one was about, probably a lumberman in search of good timber for next winter. The river itself looked black and deep, running through beds of alders, on the tender shoots of which moose are fond of feeding. After repairing damages of the transit of fourteen miles to the canoe, properly called a 'portage,' we launched our craft, and found her tolerably tight. Now was her turn to carry us as we had carried her, so off we went to look for good camping ground. We found what we may call a mansion and a 'shooting-box' both at our disposal, the former tenants having 'gone to town for the season;' in other words, a deserted lumberman's log hut, and an Indian wigwam, the former grand, imposing, and dirty; the latter light, airy, and tolerably clean. It consisted of a number of poles ranged in a semicircle, the ends meeting at the top and the intervals filled up with bark from the birch-trees. On this we decided as long as the weather was fine, so leaving Home to make the camp tidy, unpack and get out some food, we started, under Rob's guidance, to look for a moose. Quietly launching the canoe, we pushed off, paddling gently down the river, which consisted of a series of great S's and little s's, round the bends of which we hoped quietly to steal upon our game. Nobody was to talk, and sneezing or coughing was strictly forbidden. Seated in the bow, all eyes and ears, what should I see before me, standing up to her shoulders in the river, cropping an alder bush, but a fine cow moose! Now for a shot! Visions of kidneys for dinner—after salt pork and biscuits for two days and a half—marrow bones and a steak, floated before me. I steadily aimed my gun and—missed my moose! 'Give her the other barrel,' shouts poor Frank, who can't fire because I am right in front of him, and jumping about in a bark canoe, or leaning three-eighths of an inch more to one side than the other, means duck and no

green peas for dinner; and so, hopelessly, despairingly, I let her have it as she scrambled up the bank on the other side, and yet the wretched victim got away! Poor Frank! what a look of disgust, pity, and contempt he gave me! but what were his feelings to mine? To miss an animal as big as a cow at sixty yards—oh! riflemen of England, what excuse could I offer? None; I simply grovelled abjectly under the withering scorn of my companions. The shot and the shout being sufficient to scare any moose within five miles, 'slowly and sadly' we paddled home to camp—against the stream this time, and for the third day had salt pork in anticipation. To add to my misery, Frank declared that the coats of his stomach could never stand such a diet, and that, like the Israelites of old, he longed for fresh meat. There was no butcher's shop within forty miles—a snow storm had come on—the wigwam was not watertight—and all that could be suggested was that they were very creditable circumstances to be jolly under; and that we ought, if possible, to emulate the virtues of Mark Tapley in this respect. So we set to work at once. The cook reported that with flour and lard and water he could make a pancake. This was cheering, and he was desirous to lose no time in carrying out so noble an idea. Again he had made some soup with peas, rice, pork, and onions, which smelt savory; also the biscuits being toasted were crisp; and lastly, having made the camp, and put the soup on to boil, he had gone down to the river, and with a piece of pork for bait, had hooked a capital dish of trout! Carefully concealing the fact of having all these delicacies in store, he had led us on to growl, to give us a practical lesson upon contentment. When all these viands were disposed of, and washed down with good tea, we felt that, after all, the circumstances were not creditable enough for Mark Tapley. Then came the soothing pipe, and as we were enjoying it, 'there sounded a step through the foliage thick,' and the owner of the canoe we had found made his appearance.

He was, as we suspected, a lumberman who had come up from Fredericton in the fall of the previous year for pine, had built the log hut we came upon and two or three others down the river, and was going to sleep in the nearest one, wanting us to join him, as he was sure we should be badly off in the snow. However, we preferred cold and fresh air to the smell of the abandoned log hut, at all events till he had cleaned it out; and so after a glass of grog we parted, wishing him luck in his trip down to Fredericton, some 200 miles. He had a lad with him, and expected to do the distance in three days, and had been up arranging a lumbering party about the same ground for the coming season.

Up to this time the weather had been fine, but as a change was evidently threatening, we decided next morning upon cleansing and fumigating the old lumberman's hut, and making it our head-quarters. We soon cleared out everything of a fusty nature, and laying fresh fir branches, and lighting a good fire in the stove, we soon made the 'mansion' habitable.

The Indian summer, that beautiful time of the year, is generally preceded by rough weather, and we had unfortunately started just as it might be expected; so we made up our minds for a week at least of it. Fortunately it was not continuous; and though affording little prospect of finding moose in their favourite haunts, we were at no loss for amusement.

We were joined at the log hut by another hunter of rather a jealous turn, who would not go out except alone, having always some excuse ready to urge against company. Our companions knew him well enough, and had heard him speak of a lake with some beaver on it that he had discovered, and we suspected that his visits were to see if they had been touched. He had no traps with him, and therefore had not come to take them. If they were unmolested it would be easier for him to do it in winter.

One morning he had started with his canoe after we had gone out, and

returned late at night, saying he had hidden it, and was going to leave the woods early next morning, as the weather was too bad to stay; accordingly he started by daylight, so as to get over the thirty miles to the settlements in the day. We, being possessed of the bump of curiosity, determined to find out our friend Ned's beavers, if they existed; so after breakfast we made a cast round the camp, and came upon his trail where he had evidently passed with a canoe: the print in the soft moss was heavy, and twigs had been broken here and there by the canoe on his shoulder. Of course Uncas and Chingachgook, Le Rénard Subtil and Hawkeye presented themselves to our minds; and, in fact, we found that following a trail in the woods was much easier than tracking a thief in the clearings. Where no human foot had passed but that of the one we were in search of, the least print on the moss, scrape against a tree, or twig displaced or broken, was enough to guide even our inexperienced eyes—and how much more would they be to one trained to the habit?—so that we could believe now some of Cooper's tracking stories, which seemed before almost incredible. For four miles we carefully followed our traitorous friend's trail, found his canoe cunningly hidden, and, a few hundred yards further on, the lake. In the middle of the lake were two mounds of sticks and mud, looking exactly like the tops of a couple of haystacks in a flood: these were the beaver-lodges, and the end of the lake, where a small stream carried off its waters, was dammed to a sufficient height to insure enough water for these 'cute little creatures in the dry season.

After reading so many accounts of the beaver, its habits, and its gradual extinction in Canada, we considered ourselves most fortunate to have found a colony still in existence, and to see the timber as thick as a man's thigh cut by them as cleanly as with an axe to form their dam—itself a large and solid structure.

It was, however, a cold, wet day—rainy and snowy, and no beaver

themselves were visible. We found plenty of 'sign,' and also moose tracks; but as the ground about the lake was low and swampy, we did not care to change from our camp. Returning, we shot one of the tree partridges common in Canada: it was a fine cock bird, sitting with his tail outspread, and looking like a turkey in miniature. As we had not any fresh meat except fish, as the Irishman said, he was quickly plucked and popped into the soup. The evening now gave promise of fair weather, which cheered us all up, as we were getting rather down in the mouth at our want of luck. Old Home got quite excited, and when the one cupful of grog allowed to each after supper had gone round, volunteered us a song on the battle of Waterloo. As it was rather long-winded I will only give the last verse, just to show we were in good loyal company:—

'Success to Queen Victoria!
Long may she rule and reign;
Likewise unto Duke Wellington,
That noble son of Erin!
Two years he added to our time,
With pay and pension too;
For ages long we shall be called
The sons of Waterloo!'

The rhyme of 'reign' and 'Erin' requires an Irish tongue tipped with a drop of the 'cratur' to roll it out properly. However, it was successful, especially in sending Frank to sleep—either that or the supper, which his impaired digestion seemed to appreciate. The next morning, as was our custom, we went to the river side for a good wash: going carefully down the bank, slippery with the frost, my legs appear to have quarrelled with my body, and, sliding away from under me, I found myself sounding the depth of the St. John's River near its source, which, for the benefit of any F.R.G.S., I may as well state I found to be $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet. It is rather a bore, with only one suit and a half of clothes in the woods, to get a regular ducking, as there is no kitchen fire to dry them. However, the morning was too fine to stop, so we trusted they would dry on, or, at all events, they would have a chance in the evening, and

we quickly started. The weather was glorious: not a ripple on the water; every branch, every twig, nay, every leaf, reflected as clearly as in a looking-glass, as we slowly paddled along. It was, however, rather too cold for moose: the frost had been a sharp one; and in one or two places we saw the track of moose down to the water's edge. One had tried a bath, but the ice at the edge had turned him, and again we returned mooseless. Frank, however, shot a mink, a small animal of the marten tribe, but inhabiting the banks of rivers, as it chiefly lives on fish. This was destined to be his only trophy, for he was obliged to leave next day for Quebec, taking old Home with him as guide, in order to be in time for the West India mail from New York. He kindly forgave me for missing the moose, and declared he had enjoyed himself in spite of bad sport, and that his organs were immensely benefited! I found, however, on my return that he had circulated a base fabrication—that the moose I had missed was only fifteen yards off. I attribute this to an over-indulgence in Mrs. Rob's potato-cakes, as he returned, bringing on his old complaint again. Left to ourselves, Rob and I agreed to change our ground; so, packing up our traps, we pulled some twenty miles down stream, seeing plenty of 'sign,' but no moose, and camped for the night in an old wigwam made of heavy split timber, which in the night came down by the run as we snored beneath, and made us imagine ourselves violently assaulted by the original owners. However, we both began to laugh at each other's astonishment as we sat rubbing ourselves amid the ruins; and taking the opportunity to freshen up the fire, rebuilt our camp, and slept peaceably till daylight.

En route again, and again no luck. There was no standing this. I should go back worse than empty-handed, with nothing to show or say except that I had missed the only chance I got. I grew desperate.

'We must do something, Rob. Suppose we start for Fredericton, and say we have been travelling, not

shooting; it's not two hundred miles from here, and the only bad place is the big Falls: what do you say?"

'I'll go anywhere ye like, sir,' was Rob's ready response.

'Then pack up, and off, for we have only three days' grub left.' And off we soon were.

But 'l'homme propose, et Dieu dispose.' As we were running a bit of shallow water we struck a rock, and knocked a hole as big as my head in our bark canoe! She began to fill, and we had to jump out smartly into the rapid, and drag her ashore; fortunately it was not deep, and we got her up the bank without losing anything. Here we were, then, about forty miles down the river, with a hole in our gallant *bark* with which we saw at once it would be madness to attempt a wide and deep river, as the St. John's soon becomes, and just grub enough left to get us back to the clearings, if we worked hard up stream and over the 'portage,' in three days. There was no starvation in the case, of course, with trout in the river and partridges in the woods, but just enough chance about one's dinner to give you a keener appetite than usual.

The first thing was to mend the canoe. The pork sack furnished a stout, greasy bit of canvas, a strip of bark the string, and we soon tacked the patch over the hole. There were plenty of firs which gave us gum, and, mixing this with resin, we warmed it in the frying-pan, and, applying it over all, made a tolerable job—not exactly watertight (in fact, she could never boast of this), but pretty nearly so. Having accomplished our task, we produced the remains of the whisky and pork, fried half the latter, and, with a biscuit, made a capital lunch—I always found it a good thing to eat if I got a ducking—and then devoting a glass each to an earnest invocation to 'luck,' packed up, and again launched forth once more against the stream.

It was one of those lovely days of the Indian summer so often described, but never realized till seen, and then not fully appreciated unless in the woods. No breath of air

stirs the highest tree top or ruffles the tiniest wave. A crimson sun seems to peer through the deep blue haze; a stillness pervades all nature, such as in the tropics would forebode hurricane or earthquake, but here it is unaccompanied by the close, confined atmosphere which renders the beauty of the scene there so unenjoyable. Here the air is pure, refreshing, and invigorating; and yet, withal, the intense repose of nature seems to overcome you, and to woo you to a contemplation of her autumn charms, rather than to—

'Now, sir!—now, sir! Shoot! Bad luck to them, they're off!'

Fancy being aroused out of one's poetry by sounds like these! but I was, to behold, as we passed a sharp bend in the river, two moose, seduced by this very beauty I was almost dreaming of, to take a last bath for the season. Now my rifle, which was lying across my knees, had a compound patent safety dodge to prevent its going off by accident; and in the flurry of the moment I forgot it. So I tugged away at the trigger, whilst Rob raved away at my slowness: it *wouldn't* go! By this time the moose—no doubt surprised, too—had recovered, turned round, and were just disappearing in the woods, when I got my patent safety all right, and dropped the hindmost in her tracks! At last I was rewarded for my trouble; but how nearly that Indian summer's day-dream had made me lose her! I shan't try to finish it, for, as I said before, you can't appreciate the charms I was trying to describe, unless you go to the woods of Canada, so I should be only losing time. Perhaps we didn't take *all* the tit-bits for supper that evening; but I know we did take the kidneys and marrow-bones, the skin and the mouffe, or nose, which is the rarest delicacy of the moose, and went on our way rejoicing.

As good luck—whom you may remember we invoked in the morning after the canoe disaster—would have it, another lumberman's hut was within a couple of miles. We had stopped and taken a look at it as we came down, and now remembered a barrel of rock-salt was left

in it, which we determined to appropriate, and salt down the moose. It always seemed to me sad waste to leave hundredweights of good meat in the woods, and I was therefore very glad when Rob proposed to cut all the meat off the bones, and, by placing a good layer of salt between each of meat, try to keep it till snow on the ground would enable him to fetch it home easily. The next day we accordingly carried out our plans, salted our moose, and hid it 'convenient' to our first camping-ground on the St. John's.

And now, having been nearly three weeks away, and killed a moose, I began to think of returning. Splendid days, and, if possible, lovelier moonlight nights, are all very well, but you know '*toujours perdrix*' is somewhat satiating; and, besides, I had made a kind of promise to a certain individual not to be away so *very* long; and I thought, too, that if she found I preferred nature, moose, and Rob to her, now, I might at some future time be turned over to them altogether; and that when I wanted a *valse* or galop, I might be told to go to—the woods. So we packed up and went, first hiding our canoe, in the event of another trip. I never went again, but hope some one got the benefit of our leaky old bark. Making a long march of it, we got over some twenty-five miles, which is hard work through the woods, especially carrying a fair load, and roused up Mrs. Rob to give us supper just as she was in her first dream of her loving husband.

Rob found household cares requiring his immediate attention; and I was rather done up with the long march: so, instead of being off at daylight for Quebec, I took it easy, and went out partridge-shooting next day. It seems strange to shoot partridges in trees; but such is the case here. A dog is used to find and put the bird up, when he immediately flies to a tree, under which the dog, if he be a good one, stops and barks till his master comes and shoots the bird: just a little better than rook-shooting if you use a rifle; but some shoot for the 'pot,' as I did in the woods, when I was

hungry and knocked them over with shot. Getting a few brace of birds, my moose mouffle, skin, and hoofs, I said good-bye to bright little Mrs. Rob, and with many a shake of the hand from my newly-made friends; especially old John Home, and promising to send Rob back as soon as possible, we set off in his spring cart for Quebec by daylight next morning. Stopping at 'the Store' and Post-office about seven, the proprietor kindly offered me about a gill of rum, which he called his morning bitter, and highly recommended as a tonic. Declining his kind offer, we pushed on, the roads being in rather better order than coming up, avoided our cosmopolitan friend, and put up at the ubiquitous sign, 'The Half-way House,' for dinner; then on again; and after a drive of thirteen hours the little Canadian horse trotted into Point Levi, as if nearly fifty miles, with a heavy load and only middling roads—not to say bad in some places—was quite the right thing to do. I was not long in transferring myself to the ferry-boat, and soon was back again in the grim old citadel of Quebec.

'Who missed the moose?' was the first query; 'Who won the race?' I responded; and so, by carefully asking question for question, and hearing all about the great victory and the finest race ever run before, I told my own tale. I gained time for supper, and over that comforting meal forgot my disasters, and expatiated only on my luck. The arrival next morning of Rob and the moose-skin nearly dispelled all doubts of my success; and I may say they were totally removed when the mouffle made its appearance as one of the side dishes that evening.

P. L.

NORR.—For the benefit of any reader likely to try the woods in Canada, I may say that he can find no better guides about the head waters of the St. John than the Bagly brothers at Standon up the Etchemin. I started a month too late; the weather was too cold for moose to be in the rivers or lakes, and it is impossible at that time of the year to get at them on foot; but the immense number of tracks in every direction showed their presence in abundance. My expenses, including the journey from and to Quebec, were about three dollars a day. A subsequent trip in winter quite justified my estimate of the number of moose: we killed seven in ten days.

THE LONG VACATION.



LONG vacation—these are words of very pleasant import, where they have any import at all. But to great flakes of even the well-to-do part of the community they are without any practical meaning. The long vacation, in its narrowest sense, is the period of time extending generally from about the first week in August to the first week in November, during which the Law Courts are shut. In another sense it embraces a rather longer interval, that is from the middle of June to the middle of October, which is the University long vacation. But those classes of persons who are directly affected by these arrangements constitute but a small fraction of either London Society or English Society. The lawyers, indeed, are not a class of men who allow their lights to lie under

a bushel, and what they want in numbers they may be held almost to make up for in talk, activity, and general noise. Still they are, comparatively, a small class. But then, as this is likewise the period during which that section of the fashionable world which doesn't shoot partridges devotes itself to the amusements of watering-places, foreign or domestic, as the case may be, a great number of people who have no more reason for going out of town in September and October than in June or July, still love to follow the fashion, and swell the aggregate of those, the period of whose holiday is co-extensive with the long vacation. But even when we have allowed for all these various tribes, who for one reason or other seek their relaxation in the autumn, there still remains behind the immense mass of 'the people in general,' who either take it just when they can get it, or who choose for preference the full summer months for their country excursions. For all these the term 'long vacation' is meaningless. You hear of men and families going off to the sea-side in the dog-days, which though it *seems* a rational proceeding, cannot of course really be so: and you meet them just returned, about the streets, towards the last week of August, brown, healthy, and cheerful, and not in the least in low spirits at their degraded condition and dismal prospects. However, we have nothing to do just now with low people of this kind. Let us leave them to their autumn in town; and let us hope they will patronise those unhappy managers of theatres who announce that they intend to re-open with a surprisingly strong cast on the 'first of September'—ugh!

Well—the question arises in all men of well-regulated minds and proper habits about the beginning of August, what are they to do this year? There are of course a certain class of men, and in many respects, most fortunate men they are, for whom the question is already answered. They go home. To hall, or grange, or parsonage, or quiet country towns, or what not, away go the sons of squires, and rectors, and bankers, and solicitors, and country doctors, who are at the bar or in any other line of life which recognizes the long vacation, there to ride and ramble, and fish, and shoot, and picnic, and dance, and flirt for three delightful months, returning to town usually in a more sentimental frame of mind than they left it in. Such men very wisely regard the long vacation as an opportunity for combining pleasure with economy, so that their quarter's allowance which falls in at Michaelmas, or the fees which they hope will be paid up on their return to town, may be made available for the settlement of sundry small outstanding accounts which the unavoidable expenses of Greenwich, Richmond, and

the opera did not permit of their liquidating before their departure from London. Good luck to all such. May their governors live long! and their dividends never be less! But in the case of men differently situated, the aforesaid question arises, where shall they go? Any time between the middle of July and the middle of August this is sure to be a leading topic of conversation in the club smoking-room, at the Sunday breakfast-table, or under whatever other circumstances men do most freely unbutton either their minds or their waistcoats. Jack is for Switzerland, Bob is for Baden, Dick is for Algeria, Tom has got an invitation to the moors, and will circuit be over in time for him to get there by the 12th? Biggs has a hankering after Scarborough, where he rather expects to meet his partner at the last ball; and you know he can do his quarterly article there just as well as in chambers—of course. James, a loose and lavish character, thinks of taking a little fishing or shooting for himself, with a cottage. And so the schemes go round. Preparation and anticipation are half the fun of all holidays, and the present writer, who is partial to shooting, though he does not take cottages, and has no 'missus,' can safely say that greasing his boots, laying in his powder and shot, buying his certificate, and talking about these things to his friends, form a large element in the pleasure he derives from that sport. Well—each man's path is clearly chalked out at last, and then comes the start. I like watching a man packing up and making ready; and I like seeing him off, and taking a parting liquor with him at the railway station or on board the steamer. The last time I did so was on board the Boulogne steamer at London Bridge. I left the tavern with my friend, Patrick Rogue, Esq., M. A. C., of the Temple, about 11 p.m., who was bound on a mountaineering excursion. I accompanied him to his chambers, where in an exceedingly short space of time he had divested himself of all semblance of a decent London gentleman, and was ready to march out of the Whitefriars gate

in a costume compounded of one-third of an omnibus-conductor's, one-third of a gamekeeper's, and one-third of a tramp's. With a huge knapsack on his back, and an alpenstock in his hand, he trudged manfully along Thames Street, I striding by his side, until we got on board the boat. It was a lovely night, and as the people lay sleeping about on deck in rather a dim light, covered up with what looked like tarpaulins, I nearly sat down upon one or two gentlemen and ladies at the imminent risk of suffocating them, or making their noses bleed. We had some brandy-and-water; and about two o'clock the boat sheered off, and away went Paddy, wreaths of smoke curling round his wide-awake and shiny red face as he lost sight of him.

English tourists scatter a good deal in the long vacation; but of those who go abroad, the Rhine probably draws the greatest number. Everybody knows all about the Rhine. The long vacation in Rhineland is as familiar to the British public as the long vacation at the Lakes. Even the least travelled among the readers of 'London Society' will, probably, have seen once the Conversation Haus, the tables, and the pretty walks and drives at Baden-Baden: the castle at Heidelberg, the walls of Ehrenbreitstein at Coblenz, and the Château D'Else up among the lovely wooded hills at the back of the Moselle: will have dined on board the Rhine steamers, and drunk the good wine at Bingen. But we might go on for ever enumerating special points like these. The Rhine has been done: and pleasant as its waters are we shall not linger on its banks. The present writer reached it by way of Trèves, and so down the Moselle by steamer to Coblenz. As a railway, we believe, is now open from Luxembourg to Trèves, and as Trèves is a fine old Roman city which well repays a visit, that route is strongly to be commended.

The most exciting trip, to the imagination at least, of a man about to taste the long vacation, is described in Mr. Ormsby's recent

work called 'Vacation Rambles in Algeria.' To live with real Arabs in a real desert, to go out shooting real lions—not indeed that he ever shot one—and to be 'a child of freedom and a child of nature' to the extent that, as it seems, a man may be in this agreeable region, is a brightly tempting programme to the regular London man, if he have but a little pluck and muscle. The risk which you run of being murdered does not appear to be greater than it is in an Italian valley or an English railroad: while the danger of being crunched and mumbled by wild beasts, though different in kind, is not worse in degree than the danger you incur by shooting in company with strangers at the inoffensive game of these islands. A *fico* for the Rhine and Rhine cup base! I talk of Africa and savage joys. Your regular long-vacation man seldom gets so far as Egypt and round the coast of Syria. But if we could, every now and then, get a jubilee year, in which no work was done, and the pay not stopped, I would go right round the Mediterranean from Morocco back to Gibraltar, taking in Constantinople, Greece, all the Islands, Italy, and the south of France, and Spain in one glorious circuit. However, Mr. Ormsby tells us that a man can dine in London on Monday, and be in a position to furnish dinner to a lion on the following Friday in Algeria, so that our Temple friends who care for 'big game' may really think seriously about the matter. Of other game, woodcocks, snipe, and red-legged partridges are sure to be abundant.

The Rhine and the Sahara represent the two extreme poles of life between which the British bar fluctuates during the long vacation if it seeks its recreation abroad, as a Devonshire watering-place and a Scotch moor may be held to do for those who seek it at home. Between these two extremes are many grades and varieties. But it boots not to dwell upon them all. We have had a birdseye view of Europe, Asia, and Africa. Let us now take the same kind of survey of England, Ireland, and Scotland.

It is needless to say that at all the regular places—Tenby, Llandudno, Weymouth, Sidmouth, Worthing, Hastings, Folkestone, Dover, Walmer, Ramsgate, Broadstairs, Margate, Lowestoft, Cromer, Skegness, Whitby, Scarborough—the British bar is to be seen in all the glory of *déshabille*; when, like Sir Robert Walpole, *mutatis mutandis*, they

'Smile without art, and win without a fee.'

They may be seen at Killarney and Loch Katrine, in the Orkneys, and the Scillies, at Windermere and Ullswater, on the top of Snowdon, in the Isle of Man, in Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney and Sark. Certainly the pleasantest way of spending the long vacation in England, if a man is left to his own resources, is to ramble about from one of these places to another, according as his fancy leads him. Each and all have their charms; and it is easy to combine a good deal of real hard pedestrianism, with a good deal of easy sea-side lounging, bathing, and billiard-playing. There is no occasion to describe life at an English watering-place any more than life at a German one. There is the early walk down to the sands, and plunge into the sea before breakfast: there is the voracious meal of fish flesh and fowl: the boe constrictor-like torpor which succeeds it; while you smoke lazily and look from your windows upon the wide expanse of still blue sea, dotted with a few sails, which stretches away outside the harbour: there is the noon-day lounge upon the sands, where you sit on chairs and read newspapers, while the after-breakfast bathers, ladies and all, are going through their watery gymnastics: there is luncheon between one and two: there is riding, driving, walking, or sailing, till six: there is a famous dinner, unless intercepted by a pic-nic; after which you seek the pier, or the cliff, or the library, or the assembly-room, or the theatre, or the parade, or what not, where you again may be with your fellow-creatures till ten o'clock or so, listening to the unseen splash of the waves upon the dark shore: or gazing dreamily over the moonlit

sea, and becoming romantic. Then you go to bed, and the next day pursue the same round. Your health is splendid, your spirits high, your cares none. And after a fortnight of such life, when you begin to want a change, knapsack on back, set off across the hills to some other cover lying forty or fifty miles distant; and be sure to take the bridle-roads, avoiding as much as possible the towns and sticking to the sleepy old villages—

‘Deep bosomed, happy, fair, with orchard lawns,
And bowery hollows crossed with summer sea.’

So universal has this kind of thing become now, that the long vacation has produced within the last few years quite a literature of its own. This greater physical activity among the educated classes may be variously explained. A hosiery the other day, whose doings in the way of flannel shirts, combs, wool socks, and so on, bring him into contact with the movement party, attributed it all to the volunteers. ‘Afore that time, sir,’ he said to me, ‘gents used to lazy about shocking.’ This worthy fellow’s hypothesis unluckily will not hold water, as alpenstocks and knapsacks were in full play before the year 1858. The volunteers may have increased their popularity, but did not create it. Some trace it back to the time of the Crimean war. For ourselves, we cannot undertake to philosophise with the thermometer at 90°; and nothing but a dry gravel square to look at, which seems to suck up all the heat and throw it back at your open window hotter and fiercer than before. The only thing in which every one must agree, is, that the general progress of knowledge on social, sanitary, and physical subjects generally, which has brought in tubs, discarded tight clothes and ‘stiffeners,’ and effected various other changes which are even at this moment suspected to be undermining the British constitution, has opened men’s eyes to their real physical interests in all cases. Exactly when, where, and how the change began, it is idle to discuss.

If neither walking tours nor watering-places are to your taste,

perhaps shooting is. Leaving out of question the moors, which belong chiefly to persons whom the long vacation affecteth not, few things will restore a man’s energies, muscles, and peptics better than six weeks’ partridge-shooting. Shooting ground within fifty miles of London is eagerly snapped up by members of the Bar who are in pretty flourishing circumstances. For an outlay of a hundred a year, including everything, you can get a pretty fair bit of partridge-shooting—say a thousand acres—and a man, not a regular keeper, but who will do well enough to look after it. If you want cover shooting as well, you must pay a good deal more. I am not counting dogs, because those you can sell again; and all sporting dogs are nice companions, even if you don’t want to shoot over them. It is a glorious thing for the man who has been slaving in London, at rare intervals of a day or two each, since November, to wake up at four o’clock in the morning on the 1st of September, in a good bird country, in a good season, in a good house. Out of bed you leap, and make your first rush to the window, and the second to your tub, providently filled over night. By George, though, the water is not warm. Never mind, you’ll be warm enough before the day’s over. Splash away. Well, that is over: and now, on such mornings, with such work cut out for them as you have got cut out for you, to persons about to shave I would say, don’t. You’ll infallibly have to shave again, when, fourteen hours later, you dress for dinner, the heat having acted on your bristles like a hot-bed on a cucumber, and forced them into preternatural growth. The longer they are then, the better hold you will get of them, and the cleaner you will sweep them off. What does it signify how you look while you are beating Muggins’s swedes, or Podden’s thirty-acre wheat stubble? And even if that very pretty girl who made tea for you, and sang and asked you riddles (what a dreadful practice, by-the-by, this is!) last night, should appear with the luncheon-basket, in a

hat, boots, and petticoat, to which the cestus of Aphrodite herself must have been as inferior as bows are to rifles—never mind; perhaps she won't look at you, or, if she does, will admire your manly hirsuteness. Therefore, say I again, don't shave. Well, you're down to breakfast at five; that meal is over by six; another hour spent in various preparations, and at seven you start for a point about three miles distant, whence your beat lies back again towards home. Eight o'clock is a good time to begin partridge-shooting, because, while the birds have done feeding, the dew is not yet off the ground, and consequently the scent is still strong. Well, of course you beat round the grass fields, go carefully over the large wheat stubble, and—find nothing. 'Where can that covey have got to?' says some one. 'Why, they was hatched here,' says the keeper; 'I could allers see 'em any morning afore to-day.' The mystery is soon solved; the birds have run through the hedge. And while you are talking, up they get just behind you, with a loud and sudden whirr that makes your pulse beat. 'Dang them birds!' says the keeper. 'Mark!' roar the shooters, and a boy on a pony gallops to the nearest rising ground. Presently he waves his hand. It's all right; he's got them; and off you go, happy and tremulous with excitement. The first shot of the season; what a joy it is! The luncheon how refreshing; the saunter home in the fresh evening air how exquisite; the dinner how good; the old port how soothing. The only misfortune is that when you go into the drawing-room, and Letty, or Amy, or Lucy, or whatever the pretty girl's name is, wants you to talk about the last novel, or to turn over her leaves for her at the piano, you are liable to irresistible drowsiness, which not all her charms can dissipate.

Cover-shooting scarcely comes within the long vacation. Some men, indeed, shoot their covers as early as the first week in November. But it is a common practice to wait till the leaves are quite off. The weather, too, will be colder and

damper, and there is not that delight and glory in the open air which is essential to a Long Vacation pleasure. We therefore dismiss it for the present, not without some vague intention of returning to it on a future occasion.

There is of course no absolute necessity for men in the long vacation to betake themselves to any particular species of active amusement, such as climbing or shooting, or to indulge in the peculiar dissipation of watering-places, foreign or domestic. There are men fortunate enough to possess numerous acquaintances among the nobility and gentry of these realms; and a long vacation may be worse spent than in passing from one to another of the homes of merry England. A good country house in autumn is full of amusements, even without the aid of field sports. From morning to night there is always something going on. And what a pleasant meeting 'is breakfast in a well-regulated establishment of this nature. To come down on a fine fresh sunny morning, about a quarter of an hour before the lady of the house makes her appearance, and to find a couple of jolly girls picking flowers, or perhaps feeding birds on the lawn outside, while the morning breeze tosses their light brown hair, and gently swells their pretty muslins, puts you in good-humour for the day. Then in you go with a rose at your button-hole, and an honest appetite, which it seems impossible to satiate, and discuss at intervals the plans of the day. Perhaps there is to be a picnic, perhaps archery, perhaps croquet, perhaps nothing at all but sauntering and strolling about round the 'Wilderness,' or along the brook, or through the wood, and talking about Tennyson or Patti, or Trollope, or the flirtation that is going on between the curate and the doctor's girl, or the coming race ball, or the past season, according to your taste and your opportunities. Ah! a long languishing August day spent in that style has set its mark on many a gallant Templar who came down fancy free to spend his fortnight at the Hall. I

have forgotten, moreover, both riding and billiard-playing, two most dangerous and enticing pastimes in the company of ladies. Billiards are peculiarly favourable to the art of flirtation. The attitudes into which a lady must throw herself are so many incentives to coquetry, while the constant bending down of the head across the table enables a proficient in the business to make dreadful play with the eyes. For a similar reason, you can say more to a lady while you are riding at her bridle-rein than perhaps in almost any other position. For she need never appear to be offended, unless she really is so; the mane of her horse, or the skirt of her habit, or something of that kind, being quite sufficient to engage her attention, so as to avert the necessity of looking you in the face without any appearance of either rudeness or embarrassment.

However, pending the commencement of the day's operations, whatever they are to be, there will be an hour or two of general lounging, not unaccompanied by smoke. You now visit the stables, the kennels, the tame pheasants, perhaps the pigs, possibly, in these philanthropic days, the Reformatory. The perambulation over, you come indoors again, and either read a novel or play billiards till luncheon, after which, the serious business of the day fairly begins. Perhaps by great good-luck there is an agricultural meeting in the neighbourhood—a bazaar, perhaps—and a dinner of males afterwards in the Town Hall, or at the Tudor Arms, or some such fabulous animals, whence the London gentlemen return at night to show off their wit before the ladies by a few caricatures of the rustics, and to eat a little cosy supper with them before retiring to the smoking-room. I believe there is a natural taste for dissipation in all women, which recommends the idea of supper to them as something fast; and as their digestive organs are generally in better order than men's, they enjoy a little bit of irregular feeding hugely.

This same smoking-room is indeed the inner sanctuary of a country

house. The author of 'Maurice Dering,' perhaps, 'werges on the poetical' in his description of this retreat. We question the propriety, as a mere matter of taste, of such rooms being luxuriously furnished, except in the way of easy chairs. There should be characteristic distinctions between this room and others. There should be an absence of all nick-knackery: good, solid oak furniture; a good bookcase; two or three good pictures; and a portrait or two of your favourite worthies; everything, in fact, should be suggestive of gentle meditation, more than of voluptuous ease: a smoking-room should be an intellectual not a sensual apartment, and should be severe in its arrangements rather than florid or luxurious. A country house smoking-room in the long vacation will often hear some rare good talk. Squires, now-a-days, are cultivated men, and when stimulated by the conversation of professional friends, whose thoughts are not exclusively of bullocks, can fire up and hold their own well. These, indeed, are the true *noctes canaque Deum*—one of the richest and latest products of Long Vacation.

It is possible also, gentle reader, much as you may doubt it, to spend the Long Vacation in London. There is a certain peculiar charm about town and its suburbs in the month of September which most men experience who try it, but which it is very difficult to analyse. Some people think it is because you have London to yourself. I cannot say that I share in that opinion, although, doubtless, the circumstance in question may have something to do with it. I think a more poetical feeling is at the bottom of it. The decline of the year is brought home to one's mind in London more forcibly by the sudden contrast between full and empty streets than it is in the country by the gradual fall of the leaf. To the Bar in particular, to whom this paper is respectfully dedicated, the year begins in November, so that September and October are, in more senses than one, its last moments. There is, then, a gentle melancholy, a touch-

ing quiet, an air of almost reproachful resignation about London in September which goes to the heart of a native. Even Cremorne wears a pensive look; and I remember that in the days of Vauxhall the dancers there in September used to remind me of that scene at Florence, in the 'Last of the Tribunes,' in which the ladies and the knights are dancing, singing, and love-making in their suburban garden, while the plague was raging in the city. The cold October nights, frosty and windy, I knew were close at hand, and might enter in at any moment: a reflection which lent additional interest somehow to the Bacchanalian groups all round me. Yes, I am convinced it is the romance of decay which gives London its great charm at this season. You would observe it in the country, perhaps, just as much if you always lived in the country. But, as it is, coming down from town at the end of August, the fields and trees seem to you still in the freshness of youth; and it is not till near the middle of

October, at all events, that the signs of death begin to strike you.

The middle of October! Yes, we are getting on. Bob has come back from Africa, burnt to the colour of a brick, from the nape of the neck all round to the gullet. Tom is on his way from Paris; James has done with the partridges; in another fortnight term will begin; the 'Olive' will have resumed its sittings; London will be full again; the long vacation will be over. I write these lines on the 19th of August. Is it not a cold-blooded thing to talk about November now? However, every human thing has an end as well as a beginning; and if one is to describe it completely, one must describe both. Yes, even now, I am sorry to say, I can hear, like another Cassandra, the sound of laden cabs for ever rattling over the stones from London Bridge, and Paddington, and Pimlico, ringing the knell of the holidays: but, at all events, mine is yet to come, so good-bye.

JACK AT SCHOOL.

ON the bosom of the Thames, within hail of the Erith shore, there lies a man-of-war named the 'Worcester,' whose destiny has been a singular one. She was laid down in the days when we were fighting the French both on sea and land; but it so happened, owing to the war having been brought to a conclusion, that there was no immediate need for more wooden walls, and the 'Worcester' was not commissioned. Her services were not required then, and for some reason or other, best known to the Admiralty, they have never been called into requisition since; and thus the vessel enjoys the singular distinction of being a veteran man-of-war that has never been to sea. Her path has never been over anything more stormy than the placid bosom of the Thames; her home has been chiefly in the dock, and her flag has braved nothing more serious in the way of battle than the gun practice on the Woolwich marshes.

Yet, for all this, it is highly probable that, in her last account, the 'Worcester'

will be a heavier creditor of the nation than many more famous vessels that have gone forth upon the stormy seas and fought and conquered. This apparent paradox will be fully understood when it is explained that the 'Worcester' has become a school for training boys for the profession of the sea. The difficulty of finding properly qualified officers for merchant vessels has long been felt by our shipowners. Of late years our maritime commerce has increased at a marvellous rate, great improvements have taken place in the construction of ships, important discoveries have been made in the art of navigation—everything relating to the sailing of the seas has made progress except the officers. In most cases down to this present time the skippers and mates of a merchant vessel have remained the same uneducated, ignorant, coarse, brutal men that they were in the old days, when omens were consulted more than charts, when the chronometer and the sextant were regarded as new-

fangled playthings, and when voyages were made at hazard, as a drunken man staggers forth in the dark, trusting to the chapter of accidents.

To remedy this state of things, and to secure for their vessels competent officers, the shipowners of Liverpool some years ago established a training ship in the Mersey. The experiment proving successful, it was decided to establish a

similar ship in the port of London; and on application to the Admiralty for a suitable vessel, the Lords Commissioners placed her Majesty's ship 'Worcester' at the disposal of the association. The institution has already received great encouragement. A nomination to a naval cadetship in her Majesty's service has been placed at the disposal of the committee of management by Lord



See p. 316.

Clarence Paget, the Secretary to the Admiralty; Mr. Henry Green, the large shipowner, has promised six cadetships to be awarded, as prizes, to the most deserving boys who shall have been not less than two years on board the training ship; and the Board of Trade allows two years passed on board the

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'Worcester' to count as one year of sea service, which enables a cadet who has been two years on board the 'Worcester' to pass an examination as second officer after three years' service at sea. Thus at last, though very late in the day, our shipowners have become alive to the necessity of giving Jack a regular edu-

cation before sending him to sea. Hitherto the popular idea has been that boys intended for marine officers should be sent to sea young; and almost as a rule the ranks of the merchant marine service have been recruited from idle and worthless boys, who have been found unfit for anything else. It certainly was a strange idea (and how it could ever have been entertained is a marvel) that a lad who is good for nothing on shore should be considered capable of discharging the responsible duties of navigating a ship on the wide and trackless sea. But such has been the notion and such the practice, until the interests of maritime commerce have become so large and important that nothing short of the highest skill and efficiency in naval officers can possibly be tolerated. Henceforward shipowners will require their officers—their skippers and mates—to be not only men of education and skill, but gentlemen.

I have had an opportunity on two occasions of inspecting this new floating naval school. My last visit was paid on breaking-up day, when the prizes were awarded to the successful scholars by the Right Honourable Milner Gibson, President of the Board of Trade. I don't know when I have enjoyed a trip on the river so thoroughly, or when I have been so much gratified at the day's end by all I heard and saw. We went down the river from Blackwall in a steamer specially chartered for the occasion; and as we were a very select party, and had a band of music all to ourselves—the band of Mr. Green's ship-building yard—the people whom we passed in boats and barges, and on the decks of heavily laden merchantmen struggling up against the tide, evidently regarded us as persons of importance and distinction. What their precise idea with respect to us was I cannot say; but if it had been a little later in the season it would probably have taken the form of a suspicion that we were cabinet ministers, that our patronage as regards the annual fish dinner had been transferred from Greenwich to Erith, and that we had so far conformed to the spirit of the times as to take our wives with us. As it was, we were greeted with cheers at every turn, a circumstance which I will be candid enough to ascribe to the importance which we derived from the band of music, combined with the Union Jack fluttering at the fore.

After half an hour's steaming we came in sight of the 'Worcester.' There was no mistaking her, for it was a gala day on board, and she was dressed in her best. She had, as a non-nautical

excursionist remarked, 'her stays laced, and all her ribbons flying.' The moment our boat was descried, the boys on board scrambled into the rigging to man yards. In their dark blue jackets and trousers, twisting their lithe bodies in and out of the shrouds, they conveyed the idea of a shoal of leeches crawling up the sides of a Brobdingnagian bottle. As we steamed alongside, our band musically proclaimed our importance by playing 'See the Conquering Hero comes;' and the boys in the rigging received us with loud huzzas. The band and the boys could not have done more if we had been Admirals of the Fleet. Long before we blundering landmen had clambered up the gangway, the boys had dropped from the rigging and were standing on the deck to receive us. And the first remark of a motherly lady, when she had fully recovered from the perilous ascent of the gangway, and her maternal eyes rested on the row of smart, smiling, clean, open-faced lads, was, 'Oh, what nice boys! I should like to kiss them all round.' Now, I am sure that, whatever I may have to say about the training ship, I shall not be able to pay her a finer compliment than this. When a woman feels a desire to kiss a boy who is not her own boy, you may be sure that he is a good-looking boy, a well-dressed boy, a clean boy, a cheerful boy. The boys on board the 'Worcester' were all this; and though some were, of course, handsomer and better looking than others, yet discipline and training had given them all the same uniform look of well-mannered young gentlemen. You would have said that they were destined to be midshipmen on board a man-of-war, rather than in the merchant service.

While we are waiting for Mr. Milner Gibson, we may as well go over the ship and see what is to be seen. Above here, on the upper deck, the vessel is furnished in all respects like a sea-going craft of the first class. The whole of the rigging is complete, with every rope, spar, and sail which a sailor is required to know and put his hand to on a voyage; and each porthole has a gun with all the appliances for working in trim order and ready at hand. So complete is the 'Worcester' in this respect, that she might be put to sea and cleared for action at any moment. Here on this deck about two hundred boys are exercised in all the duties of a first-class ship under an able commander and efficient subordinate officers. They are taught practical seamanship, such as knotting, aplicing, reefing, furling,

heaving the lead, navigation, and gunnery. Their training, however, begins on the main deck below. This deck, which extends the whole length of the ship, is both the schoolroom and the dining-room. Dinner tables and 'deaks' alternate throughout its whole length. The instruction here is carried on by several masters—well qualified gentlemen from the universities, who are masters, not in the nautical, but the school sense. We passed one of them just now on the main deck in his college cap and gown, and wondered at the apparition of a 'college don' mingling officially with blue jackets on a quarter-deck. Here, then, in this spacious schoolroom, well lighted by portholes, which have been converted into windows, the boys are taught the usual branches of a sound English education, with the addition of geometry, trigonometry, mechanics, the steam engine, marine surveying, chart drawing, and French.

The prospectus of this seminary for young gentlemen sailors sets forth that the terms of admission are thirty-five guineas per annum, payable half-yearly in advance; two guineas per annum for medical attendance; and two guineas extra for Latin, which, however, is optional. Each boy is provided with a uniform, for which five guineas are charged; and parents are required to provide under clothing and shoes according to a fixed scale. No boys are admitted who are under twelve or over fifteen years of age; nor are any to remain on board the ship after they have attained the age of seventeen. All candidates must be approved by the committee, and passed by the medical officer, and none are deemed eligible who cannot read and write fairly, and perform the simple rules of arithmetic. Holidays of five weeks' duration are given at Midsummer, and four weeks at Christmas. I was informed by a parent of one of the boys that the whole expense of keeping his son on board the 'Worcester' was about 50*l.* a year, which, it must be allowed, is a very moderate sum considering that the boy is not only educated in a general way, but is, at the same time, taught a profession, and qualified to earn his living, with every prospect of advancement, the moment he leaves the ship. In ordinary cases, when a boy comes home from school, *Paterfamilias* is utterly at a loss what to do with him. The youth has learned a great deal theoretically, but nothing practically. He has to go to school again in some shop or office to learn his trade or profession. But the 'Worcester' conducts

the two processes at once, and sends home a boy who is well instructed in all the usual branches of knowledge, and is, at the same time, a practised sailor.

The standard of education on board the 'Worcester' is a high one. At the recent examination questions such as the following were correctly answered by the boys without the assistance of books. In arithmetic: Find the sum of '125 of 3*os.*, '375 of 13*s.* 4*d.*, and '875 of 17*s.* 6*d.* In geometry: About a given circle to describe a triangle, equiangular to a given triangle. In algebra: Divide $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2} - 4 \times \frac{1}{2} + 6 \times -2 \times \frac{1}{2}$, by $\frac{1}{2} - 4 \times \frac{1}{2} + 2$. In navigation: If a ship sail from latitude 51° 58' N., longitude 70° 3' E. on the following true courses; W.N.W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W. 24, N.W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W. 18, S.S.W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W. 32, S. by E. 14 miles: required her latitude. In nautical astronomy: At what time will the star β Scorpii pass the meridian of a place in latitude 37° 40' S., and longitude, 16° W., on December 15th, and at what distance N. or S. of the zenith? In trigonometry: From B, the top of a ship's mast, which was 80 feet above the water, the angle of depression of another ship's hull at C upon the water was 20°: required the distance of the ships.

A skipper or mate of the old school would be perfectly dumbfounded by such questions. The very language in which they are conveyed would be so much Greek to him. Yet by the boys of the 'Worcester' all these questions, and many more equally as difficult, were answered with the greatest readiness.

Once more, at a given signal, the boys scramble into the rigging and man the yards, while the indefatigable band plays 'See the Conquering Hero.' This time the conquering hero who is coming aboard is the President of the Board of Trade, whom we descried under an umbrella on the deck of an approaching steamer. It certainly was very unhand-some of the elements to come down on the head of the great commercial department in the way it did; but Mr. Milner Gibson's good-humour was as proof against any annoyance as his umbrella was against the pelting shower, and he came up the sloppy gangway smiling and prepared to shake hands with all mankind. And all the mankind and womankind on board actually did shake hands with him. It was an opportunity not to be missed. It is not every day that Brown, Jones, and Robinson have a chance of shaking hands with a cabinet minister; and a cabinet minister coming up a slippery ladder in a shower of rain is a person to be taken advantage of. He was too uncertain

of his footing, too glad to reach the *lignum firmum* of the 'Worcester's' quarter-deck to refuse anything. So he submitted himself in the most amiable manner to be shaken by the hand by all comers.

Owing to the rather showery disposition of the weather, the ceremony of distributing the prizes was performed on the main deck. Mr. Henry Green, one of the most active and liberal supporters of the institution, took the chair under a canopy formed of Union Jacks, and Mr. Milner Gibson and other gentlemen sat at a table in front of him, while the boys disposed themselves in a group facing the chairman—the scene reminding me of the court-martial in 'Black-eyed Susan,' the only court-martial, by the way, I ever witnessed. After the reading of the report and the speeches (which were a great deal too long), the boys stepped forward one by one to receive the prizes from the hands of Mr. Gibson; and here again *Materfamilias* was prompted to give audible expression to her motherly feelings, especially when a very little boy, as the reward of nautical knowledge which would have made Lord Nelson stare, received the prize of a telescope. *Materfamilias* said, 'Bless his little heart!' and I am sure she would have seized and kissed the youngster there and then, if she could only have got at him. One after the other the lads went up to the table to receive the reward of their proficiency, each one receiving a hearty cheer as he retired with his prize, covered with honour and with blushes. The prizes consisted chiefly of nautical instruments, such as quadrants and sextants, telescopes, pocket compasses, and books on seamanship, some of the articles being of considerable value, which was greatly enhanced in every case by an inscription setting forth the boy's name and qualifications. In addition to the prizes, nine appointments as midshipmen were given by Mr. Green and other shipowners, to boys who had been two years on board the 'Worcester' and had obtained their certificate of qualification. Each certificate bears on the back a record of the examination which the boy has passed. Thus it was certified that nine of the boys had passed a satisfactory examination in arithmetic, including vulgar and decimal fractions and proportion; that they could find the latitude by sun or star; furl a royal single-handed; heave the lead; give the soundings; pull an oar or steer a boat; also find the latitude by the pole star and the moon; find the error of chronometer and the longitude by chronometer;

take a lunar observation and deduce the longitude therefrom; note the variation of the compass by altitude and azimuth; also that they had a thorough knowledge of plane and spherical trigonometry, and the application of the latter to great circle sailing; and could, besides, construct marine charts, strap a block, turn in a dead eye, worm parcel, serve a rope, and pass an earring. In fact, those nine young gentlemen were master of a score of arts which very few of those present had ever heard the names of. It was a wonder, indeed, how such very small heads could contain so much knowledge.

The courtesy and gentlemanly bearing which distinguished the lads as a body spoke highly for the system under which they had been trained. We had ample proofs of the progress they had made in their studies, in the examination papers submitted to our inspection on the main-deck. Seeing them strolling arm-in-arm on the upper deck, showing each other their prizes, conversing with the greatest cheerfulness and animation, and all looking fresh, healthy, and full of the capacity for enjoyment, it was equally evident that the closest attention had been paid to the cultivation of their morals, their manners, and their general conduct. As an example of the high moral tone that exists among them, I may mention a little incident which really occurred on board the ship. A new boy proposed to some of his schoolfellows that they should rob the fruit-seller when he came on board with his basket of wares. The proposition was acquiesced in, the boys never dreaming that their new companion was in earnest. The moment, however, they found that he was really bent upon carrying out his dishonest design, they denounced him to the whole ship. The boys themselves tried the offender by court-martial, found him guilty, and sent him to Coventry for a fortnight. Prayers are read every morning and evening, and Divine service is performed every Sunday by the chaplain. Bad language is strictly forbidden, and is never heard on board the 'Worcester.' The boys are taught that they may be very good sailors and very efficient officers without resorting to oaths, even to the mild extent of shivering their timbers. Each boy, on leaving the ship, is presented with a Bible by Mr. Bullivant, the indefatigable honorary secretary of the institution, who, in an inscription on the fly-leaf, gives them some very plain and sensible advice for their guidance through life.

I should not omit to mention that I

visited the lower deck, which forms one vast dormitory, slung from end to end with neat and trim hammocks. Here the sleeping accommodation is all that the fondest mamma could desire, the apartment being large and airy, and the bed-clothing scrupulously clean. There is a large lavatory adjoining, and every convenience for promoting health and cleanliness.

After the distribution of the prizes, three boats' crews, composed of the pupils, engaged in a rowing match, making a large circle three times round the ship. All the boys used their oars with great skill, and accomplished their task in a marvellously short time, and with much spirit. A dance was then extemporized on the upper deck, and was kept up with great animation until the little steamer came alongside to convey the visitors back to Blackwall. I can only say for myself that I was very loth to leave so pleasant and cheerful a scene; and, on behalf of all the schoolboys I had ever known, I envied those fortunate lads who were so carefully taught and so well cared for on board the 'Worcester.' It is not often that a man wishes to have his schooldays over again; but I could have wished for a return of my schooldays then, if I could have passed them like one of those bright, cheery-faced lads, who were now up in the rigging, manning the yards, and waving us adieu.

Having seen Jack at school afloat, I had an opportunity very shortly afterwards of visiting Jack at school ashore. It may be said that it is the interest of the shipowners to support the 'Worcester,' as by so doing they obtain better officers for their vessels. The asylum and school at Snaresbrook is another affair. Here the shipowners exercise their charity with no prospect of reward, except in the consciousness of having discharged a Christian duty. The Merchant Seamen's Orphan Asylum was established in the year 1827, by a few benevolent individuals, who were touched by the destitute condition of the orphan children of sailors in the metropolis. It was at first a small house in Clarke Street, St. George's-in-the-East, where only from ten to twelve boys were received; but, as the funds increased, larger premises were taken in the Bow Road, where the number of children maintained was about 120. In 1860 it was resolved to erect a new building in the country, specially adapted to the requirements of the charity. The site at Snaresbrook was

accordingly purchased; and the first stone of the building was laid by the late Prince Consort on the 28th of June, 1861. The building has, in this connection, a peculiar interest, from the fact that its foundation-stone was the last one laid by the lamented husband of our sovereign. On the 10th of July, 1862, the occupation of the new building was commenced; and on the 29th it was formally opened by Earl Russell, the president of the charity. This handsome asylum is well worth a visit. It is situated on the borders of Epping Forest, and the view from its tower takes in every variety of scenery for many miles around, including the silver Thames, creeping serpent-like to the sea, and bearing a 'great load of ships upon its glittering back. I daresay the half-holiday visitors to the Forest, when they have suddenly emerged from the sylvan glades of Epping, and come upon this imposing building, rearing its gabled roof and noble tower far above the tallest of the forest trees, have often wondered to what wealthy nobleman the mansion belonged. They could never dream that it was an asylum for the orphan children of merchant seamen. Yet there is no fault to be found with the magnificence of the establishment, since it has been built entirely at the expense of shipowners and others interested in the merchant service. As an example of the liberality with which the institution is supported, I may mention that Lady Morrison—a noble and good woman living in the neighbourhood—besides contributing many hundreds of pounds to the general fund, has, at her own sole expense, built a beautiful chapel, dedicated to 'the glory of God, and the use of the Merchant Seamen's Orphan Asylum,' and also built and furnished a handsome reception-room in the interior of the building. Mr. Henry Green, in addition to his annual subscription, has given 500*l.* towards the expenses of the building; many other shipowners have been equally liberal, and Mr. Joseph Some, M.P., is a donor to the amount of 262*l.*

There are at present in the asylum 145 children, 95 being boys, and 50 girls; but there is accommodation for 250. The staff consists of a resident matron, two schoolmasters, a schoolmistress, and a non-resident chaplain; and as servants, a nurse, cook, scullery-maid, two laundrymaids, two housemaids, a porter, and an engineer. The direction is confided by the supporters to a committee of management, consisting of twenty-four gentlemen, merchants,

shipowners, and others, of the City of London, with Mr. Henry Green, of the celebrated Blackwall firm, as treasurer. The design of the institution is to afford suitable relief to the orphans of seamen in the merchant service, by rescuing them from vice and profligacy, by providing them clothing, maintenance, and education; by endeavouring to implant in their minds the principles of religion and morality, and ultimately placing them, as far as practicable, in situations either at sea, as sailors, or on shore, in any other occupation they may be adapted for. As an example of the misfortunes which it is the object of the asylum to alleviate, I may quote a few entries from the pupil list:—

‘John —; father was captain of the “A—,” and is supposed to have been wrecked, with all hands, leaving a widow and three children dependent on their mother’s exertions.’

‘Edward —; father, ship’s steward, brutally murdered by Chinese coolies, leaving a widow and four children.’

‘Robert —; father was mate on board the “G—,” and was drowned through a collision, leaving a widow and two children.’

‘Margaret —; father was ship’s carpenter; and died, leaving a widow and four children totally unprovided for.’

The orphans of all ranks and classes in the service are admitted on equal terms; from the children of the captain down to those of the cook. The boys are resident from 7 to 14, the girls from 7 to 15.

In going over the building, and seeing so many poor orphans fed and clothed and educated, and at the same time surrounded by every appliance for the promotion of comfort and health, I could not help a reflection—which frequently rises in my mind at the spectacle of a well-ordered British charity—a reflection which almost resolves itself into the wish that I were an unfortunate of some kind, that I might be so well treated, and be made so happy. It was near the close of a burning summer’s day, that, in company with a friend, I arrived at the gate of the asylum. The bell was speedily answered by a little boy in blue, a sailor in miniature, one of the orphan inmates. He ran away with my card, and in a few minutes I was met at the door by Mr. Ridler, the first master, whose square cap proclaimed the university man. He took us at once into the schoolroom, a large, airy apartment, where the boys were busy at their tasks. It was a pleasant sight. The happy faces that were turned upon

us came like a gleam of sunshine. There was none of the weariness and listlessness which are so often noticed in town schools, especially towards the close of the afternoon. The order was given for the band to turn out and give a specimen of their music; and immediately a dozen little fellows jumped up, and with magical quickness armed themselves with fife and flute and drum. At the first signal they all went off together with the sailors’ hornpipe, marching out of the schoolroom, along the corridor, down the stairs, and out into the quadrangle. They played admirably, and with wonderful steadiness and precision. It was quite a treat to hear them, and no less wonderful to see them; for the fifes and the flutes were mere mites of boys, and the boy who beat the big drum was completely hid behind his instrument. Mr. Sketchley’s friend, Mrs. Brown, would have said that he was a deal too young to be trusted with so big a drum. It certainly was wonderful that such very small boys should have acquired so much proficiency. The credit of this is entirely due to Mr. Ridler, the first master, who, besides being learned in Latin and Greek, and a master of all the ologies, is a very accomplished musician, and a skilful performer on the piano and organ. I saw almost at a glance that Mr. Ridler was the right man in the right place. He had the right way with him; spoke cheerily and heartily, with something of a sailor’s bluntness, and something of a sailor’s colloquial familiarity of expression. There was nothing whatever of the pedagogue about him. And this was shown in a very striking way, when he tossed aside his books and his learning, and said, ‘Now then, lads, the sailors’ hornpipe; look sharp.’ There were many proofs of Mr. Ridler’s popularity with the pupils and their grateful parents—the mothers; for, alas! fathers they had none. A silver snuff-box, presented to him by the boys, and many other little gifts, including a ‘copy of verses’ from a sailor’s widow—all she had to give. Perhaps this was the most precious gift of all, for it breathed a widow’s blessing for kindness to her fatherless boy.

The education given at the asylum is of a thoroughly practical character—consisting chiefly of reading, writing, arithmetic, mathematics, with the addition of music if the pupils incline that way. A great point, however, is made of grounding them well in these branches, so that in after life they may build any higher superstructure of

knowledge which their position may admit of. As a proof that the training has been most successful, Mr. Hackwood, the secretary, assures me that there is not a known instance of any of the 600 children who have been educated at the asylum, having been unable to gain for themselves a good and honest livelihood; while many occupy high and trustworthy positions both on shore and at sea; and a large number now help to support the institution which was once their foster-home.

The building is remarkably well adapted for its purpose; and in this respect the architect seems to have pursued a course not very common, I regret to say, when institutions of this kind are concerned—that of consulting the convenience and accommodation of the inmates rather than his own glory as a rearer of a mere costly piece of ornamentation. The rooms and corridors are all plain and simple, but they are all large and airy, and furnished with every necessary convenience. Adjoining each set of dormitories there is a bath-room, with hot and cold water laid on; a sick-room, or hospital—very rarely occupied—and a washing and dressing room. I was particularly pleased with the arrangements for washing. In addition to the usual washhand basins, there is a row of little wooden tubs fixed to the floor, with the water laid on, and pipes for letting it run away immediately it is used. Each of these tubs is attached to a seat, and their use is very graphically indicated by the name given to them by the boys—'trotter-boxes.' The food is excellent and plentiful, I was assured, and this I could well believe, as all the boys and girls 'looked like their victuals.' I must not omit to mention that I peeped into the girls' schoolroom, and saw some forty or fifty little maidens engaged in sewing. Many

of them were very pretty, and in their trim, neat dresses, very picturesque. An artist might have picked a dozen models from among them. Besides the ordinary branches of education, the girls are taught sewing and housework. The present nurse was, twenty years ago, a girl in the asylum. The nurse preceding was also brought up in the asylum. She left to marry the engineer, who had likewise received the benefits of the institution. I mentioned just now that the infirmary was unoccupied. I am informed that it never has been occupied, and that no illness has occurred among the children since they have been resident at Snarebrook.

Seeing and hearing all this, on an occasion when I had taken the institution unawares, I felt convinced that the Merchant Seamen's Orphan Asylum at Snarebrook was an admirably-managed institution. And I think it will be allowed that all the benefits to the poor orphans are secured with a strict regard to economy, when it is stated that the cost of maintenance of each child, including all house expenses, clothing, and education, is only about 22*l.* per annum.

I have only a word to add. The little boys of the band play on their flutes and fifes charmingly; but they are growing up, and their wind is improving, and they aspire to add a little 'brass' to the band. Will any one, with sympathy for the sailor's orphan and a soul for music, step forward with a few cornets, a horn or two, and a trombone? The sailor's orphan has claims upon us all. We never sit down to a meal but we enjoy some produce of a foreign land, which the sailor brings to us from across the sea, always at the peril of his life, and at the risk of his children's bread.

A. H.



ALONE AND TOWN-TIED.



ENDORSE with hearty approval the sentiments about solitude, attributed to the late Mr. Selkirk, of St. Juan Fernandez, 'monarch of all he surveyed,' &c., &c.; and in a Selkirkian spirit I, a solitary, have been these four weeks past asking of solitude the strictly personal home question, where are the charms reported to be found on its face. How lovely has solitude appeared after a day-long wrangle in a crowded court—the morning after a heavy wine party—the moment after the burst and dispersion of a domestic storm—after escape from an imminent danger—after hearing of some unexpected success—when savage with self and everybody else—when a fit of indigestion had to be got over, or a quantity of real work to be got through.

At such times solitude has come out easily chief, without superior, without equal. On such occasions I have seen it fairer than the fairest.

Out of the fold in which I have been penned—do not smile, reader, or think of the wolf who dressed in a sheep's fleece—for six anxious hours, my mind on tenter-hooks, and intent on a case bristling with 'points,' watching with painful eagerness for the coming thrust of my opponent, looking each minute for the 'learned' and 'friendly' fling which my 'learned friend' on the other side desired to give me; weary of standing, volumes of Reports in hand, to be badgered by four experts, and answer their strange questions in succession, at the same time that my mental eye has had to be kept on that of my opponent, and my ear open to the meaningless babbling of the second junior, when the hour has chimed for the Inquisitors to cease from racking; and I have felt free to forget the whole jargon of the law, until sixteen hours shall have

gone away; when I have got back to my room, which solitude shares with me, and have in his voiceless company enjoyed the exquisite pleasure of being unspoken to, then I have seen beauties in solitude which I am bound in honour to mention. On solitude after a 'wine' I will not stop to dwell; I leave the question to it and soda-water which is the greater; and of the other occasions it were over long to write.

Suffice it, if I have shown that solitude is not without its attractions. It must, however, be conceded that these attractions are strictly evanescent, gifted though they may be with the power of reproducing themselves; and that when the occasion which has made them appear has passed away, they also become as unsubstantial as the figures in a magic lantern. Take away the slide, and you have nothing but the blank sheet with its white moon face to stare at. I take it, the opportunity which Mr. Selkirk had of discovering solitude's charms was unfavourable as he seems to have found it. Without feeling so much oppressed by the society of his fellows as to desire that he and they might 'be better strangers;' without that vexedness of spirit which I have suggested the badgered lawyer feels, and which makes a temporary companionship with solitude a most refreshing one; without the faculty of making comrades out of airy nothings, or of the fancies born of his own imagination, he was forced suddenly into the society of his own actual self, and more thoroughly than the hero (?) of the 'London Journal,' was he 'left alone.' The curiosity begotten by the novelty of his situation once got rid of; his gregarious yearnings daily growing stronger and stronger; and the desolation of his forced exile becoming hourly more apparent, he must indeed have criticized with heartfelt severity every individual fruit of his 'unwelcome guest.'

It is small wonder that he found them all ugly, and in the boldness of his despair put the strong personal question which is reported of him. There is much excuse for him if he asserted that the sages unnamed talked twaddle; or even if he went further, and hinted, in the absence of charity, at the way beyond his reach, in which these sages made their so-called solitude endurable. Having said enough, and perhaps a trifle over, to show that under certain circumstances Mr. Selkirk's question is pure slander, I feel warranted in saying that in the main the slander is justifiable. I began by stating that I heartily endorsed his sentiments, and, with the above qualification, I do. My reasons for endorsing them spring, as I have also said, out of experiences of the last four weeks.

Reader, seated, it may be, in thy easy chair, digesting an unhurried breakfast, and enjoying in the fullness of thy leisure the unspeakable pleasure of a morning pipe; or rolling on thy back at ease in the sweet-scented field, through which the stream runneth which holds the trout thou wilt eat to-day at dinner; partridge-shooting reader; free, untown-tied readers of every sort, picture to yourselves the scene of my experiences; relish your freedom with a keener zest, and be thankful you are not as this scribbler, whose monastic melancholy you read of. Scene, London; a room 10 feet by 8, in Dull Court; a confusion of books and every sort of litter; the author, coatless and perspiring, seated at a table, writing, and engaged in an attempt to persuade himself that he is as comfortable as possible; and that he is enjoying the perfect quiet the vacation has brought.

The room in Dull Court is mine, reader; and I am he who is striving to make things pleasant to himself. The room is the same with that I have before mentioned as the place where, on occasions, solitude is entertained, and found to be so charming. The moderate dimensions of the room are encroached upon by lumber of many kinds. To the dusty tomes in bilious-looking leather an ample space is given; and, cheek-by-jowl with musty volumes which contain the body of the ancient law, stand serious-looking rows of comparatively light literature, including the works of the late Adam Smith, Montesquieu's 'Greatness of the Romans,' and the ere-while treasured, but now unread writings of Francis of Verulam. Next come the later books on newer law, elbowing their companions of the more ancient order in most unseemly

fashion. With what scorn, by the way, must old Father Antic look upon his youngest son, now entered on his father's inheritance! With what contempt must the case which Lord Eldon reviewed for twenty years before he gave judgment, look out from the pages where its long life is recorded, upon a suit whose existence from writ to judgment has not extended over more than five weeks. How vulgar to a cause on which two entire fortunes were spent, must a modern suit appear; and who know so well as the suitors how much even modern suits cost? Cases whose names are encircled with a glory of terms which are simply incomprehensible to the new pretenders, who were familiar with 'exigent de novo,' and 'cognizance de droit,' with Jeofails and Femesuit, 'mulier puiane,' and the 'seisin which fed contingent uses'; how must they look with feudal scorn upon the plain, unlearned creatures to whom even John Doe and Richard Roe are historical personages. Peace to their ashes, though they 'misused the king's press damnably!' it must be punishment enough, without our invoking more, if the framers of these suits have gone whither their works can follow them.

In the corner opposite to where these old decrees stand—I bought them by the yard, for the same purpose that Romeo's apothecary bought his cakes of roses and the empty boxes, to make up a show—is a case which holds the books that once were my chief delight. They contain no hint of law, argue nothing, are not precise; they are fit 'companions of my solitude, ashamed though I seem to be of them by hiding them behind the curtained glass covers of the bookcase. I treasure them rather for the long friendship that has been between us, and for the past pleasures they have yielded, than for present use. The time required by the scramble after place and pelf has withdrawn me from communion with these. The languages some of them speak make them sealed books to my slippery memory. A table, four chairs, a ricketty settee, and a washstand, once self-containing, but now as unable as my laundress to keep its own secrets, make up the furnishings, if collections of dusty papers and the tied-up troubles of suitors now at peace be added. The wall over the fire-place is ornamented by an almanac issued gratuitously by a life insurance office; and a table of the sittings of the courts in last term, beautified around the margins by portraits of the judges, from the pen of my constant visitor and friendly time-killer, Charles R——.

The bell which is wont to summon the lad in whom I have a joint ownership, and who is now on his holiday outing, stands mute and musicless; the lamp, with its glass broken on one side, shows signs of its need of renewal, and the establishment in general seems to stand in sad want of a 'refresher.'

Here with solitude have I kept company during four mortal weeks; finding even in solitude more companionship than in the crowd of folk unknowing and unknown to me, who live and breathe in the great world outside. The sentiment is not novel, but certainly most true, that a great city is a great solitude. One walks through it, and as at this season of the year especially, finds no one with whom to divide his thoughts. Crowds there are surging through the streets, thousands of people passing and repassing, with whom he has nothing but humanity in common. He cannot speak to them but on the footing of new acquaintance; must sound his way into their character; and be on his guard against strange habits and tendencies; maybe he falls in with a man who has a ridiculously small estimate of the crime of homicide, which he may at any moment be forced to know more thoroughly to his disadvantage. There must be heaps of fine creatures whom to know would be great gain, amongst the thousands now in that hot Strand; but they are utterly past finding out, except under conditions which cannot be complied with, introduction, mutual knowledge of each other, studying of character, &c., &c. To me they are as heathen men and publicans; if I desired to know them I could not do so. But I do not desire it; 'I have friends, and kinder friends has no man,' men whose adoption tried has made me grapple them to my soul with hooks of steel; and there is no room in my affection for more to come in. But they, more sensible than I, have left their haunts full four weeks ago, and I seek their rooms in vain if I attempt to see them. J. is shooting; D. is getting married; R. is climbing mountains; W. is rowing up the Thames. On R.'s local habitation is his name, printed in letters large enough to typify his expectations of professional success. The black door is closed in grim inhospitality; a notice gummed over the letter-hole bids whomsoever will be so incautious, put papers through the door, and announces that Mr. R. will return in the middle of October. I walked up the stairs in the hope of finding R., whom I thought to be a detenu like myself; the notice on the door was the

answer my expectation received. I smiled at the vanity, as I called it, which made R. imagine that anybody would have papers to leave for him, or, having them, would be imprudent enough to obey the words of the written order; and then walked down again, the stairs creaking and echoing as stairs in empty houses only can, into the court, and so to W.'s chambers. The 'oak' not sported; sounds of some one within. W. is in town. Here, at all events, is a friend to talk with. With the strong excitement which a man in long vacation feels on finding some supposed absentee suddenly turning up, I give a vigorous rap on the knocker, accompanying the action by the peculiar freemason-like sort of sign, by which I am wont to convey to W. that I, not Mr. Timmins' foreman, subtle in accounts, is the applicant for admission. The sound of life within ceases; a jingle of glass which, as I fancied, my ear caught a moment ago is heard no more; a step whose name is unwilling falls upon the passage which leads, as I know, to W.'s own room, and the inner door within the oak is slowly opened.

Behold, not W., but W.'s clerk, whose face brightens up when he finds that the door-hammerer is not his master, but myself. The silence, almost awful, which prevailed in the inner chamber, whence the jingle of glass and the troll of a song had given, but now, hints of occupants, suddenly gives way before some piece of clerkly wit; and W.'s clerk, age about 15, feels bound to volunteer, as explanation of the same, that Mr. W. being away, he had taken the liberty of asking a few friends to spend the evening. W. is not in town then; his clerk keeps carnival, *anglicè*, High Jinks, in his chambers; and the place where 'opinions' were formed, and 'cases' concocted, interrogatories drawn, and pleas pleaded, is now in possession of clerkly jollity; where the 'spirit of the laws' reigned but lately, the gatherings of Long John now hold sway. A wiser and a sadder man, I go back in the gloaming to my chamber, and sit a full hour, puffing furiously at my pipe. The work which had kept me in town when all else had fled, lay in many sheets upon the table, waiting but for a few closing words to take rank among the labours done. Solitude, which had helped me so much in the doing of it, is still with me; and now that I have got the utmost I can out of it, I begin to turn myself from it, like an ungrateful man, with indifference if not with loathing. I picture to myself the absences of whose doings I have

spoken; the pleasures and delights they are getting out of holiday, and think how wise they are to enjoy the life while they have it. The scenes in which they are moving, and the kindly faces which I know beam around them rise to my mind's eye; and as they do so they crowd out the small field which lies immediately before it, so that the room 10 feet by 8 is not nearly large enough to hold them. There, in the corner where the favourite books stand, I see W., looking healthy and jolly, as he pulls with vigorous stroke past Winter Hill and Bisham Woods on his voyage to Marlow town; the lovely trees of Bisham droop into the water, where lately the almanac published gratuitously by the insurance office alone met my view; and, under the ledge of the mantelshef, behold trouble-saving O. lies on his back in the bottom of his boat, the blue smoke curling upwards from the pipe-holding lips, while Fanny and Nelly Walters paddle his laziness's boat along. By the door, on the left of the ancient law books, see B. sweltering up the hitherto unscaled Toothpickhorn, enjoying the contrast between his present occupation and the sedentary life he leads for eleven months in the year; feeling, in addition to the honour which his painstaking pleasure will yield him at the next meeting of the Alpine Club, the perpetual satisfaction which must be inseparable from these high ascents, of dangers ever present and successively overcome. As he scrambles (Mr. Guide Balmat with him) from crag to crag, his appetite for the toil increasing by indulgence, tenant in tail, and common recoverer, vouchers to warrantry et hoc genus omne, wake up from their sleep of centuries, and stand up in the dusty sheets which have covered them over, to wonder at the marvellous performer who is exhibiting before them. What the impression made on them by the sight may be, it is not mine to know. They are speechless, dumb; Lord Brougham closed their mouths many years ago; so they cannot tell me what they think of it; but they are evidently astonished, not only by the act itself, but still more by the assurance that the actor is one who yet distinct from those who years ago coined the strange names they bear, and cut out the curiously cumbersome garments in which they are clothed.

I point out to solitude these things of life and movement, and intend it to say they are lovely and enjoyable. Perhaps it was too much to expect of it; it could not be supposed to be enchanted with anything so bustling; it waited long before making any answer, and then, as an Irish witness once told me, in giving an account of a conversation, he said nothing. I became angry, for the mental pictures I had seen had given me a hankering after society, which I had not before felt; and hence came it that the difference between solitude and myself grew to so great a head that I found myself adopting the Selkirkian impertinence, and asking poor solitude to show up its charms, if it had any.

I lighted the candles, and sat down to finish my task. The pictures I had seen, though they vanished before Messrs. Price and Co.'s burning wicks, had left an impression on my mind which was not to be got rid of. I resolved to be as unceremonious to my companion as Hamlet was to Polonius, and forthwith to quit his society; and away rushed my pen in all the agony of a driven quill, over the fair paper which its points marred, till that which was wanting to the work had been supplied, and the whole was ready for gracious Mr. —'s hands. As if to show that it resented the breach of friendship, solitude called upon its allies to be indignant; and, accordingly, all that night, as I wore it away in writing, did the wainscot creak, and windows lend themselves to sighing winds; the door, which I thought hasped, came open of its own accord; shapeless things, without substance, darted across the floor; and more than once I stopped to assure myself I had not heard a groan. The enemy did not beat me, though when the door fell open, my stock of courage, seriously damaged by indigestion and over-use of tobacco, showed signs of faltering. I finished my task, and rejoiced over the work and labour done; and next morning the 9.15 train whirled me away from Paddington into the beautiful west, where it is my great delight to be; and where at this moment I can see, without searching for them, charms in the face of my three-year old little niece, greater, infinitely greater, than the whole family of solitude can show.

A STROLL IN BALDWIN'S GARDENS.

THERE is nothing essentially picturesque either in poverty or in crime; and yet it is so common a matter to read of both from a romantic point of view, or to regard either of them through a highly-coloured medium, that the very words, 'lowest portion of the metropolis,' or 'thief London,' seem to suggest something quite away from ordinary experience, and belonging to an existence mysterious and unapproachable, except by the few people who have made it their business to visit 'the dens' in which it is concealed. It is not a little remarkable that whenever we come upon these phrases, even though they may refer to some locality with which we are tolerably familiar, we seem all at once to place the scene at an imaginary distance, and almost fail to recognize in the name of the district the rows of shabby, wretched tenements past which we have for years been in the habit of making 'short cuts' to the broader and more respectable thoroughfares.

It is seldom that romantic or picturesque associations lend an interest to the great mass of wretchedness which lies only half hidden in the London slums. Apart from the terrible records of human suffering which should of themselves be sufficient to move us to compassion, the wonderful varieties of poverty, and the strange outward differences in the mode of life displayed by the poor in the widely-separated districts which they occupy, are more truly interesting than any merely ideal condition with which they have been associated.

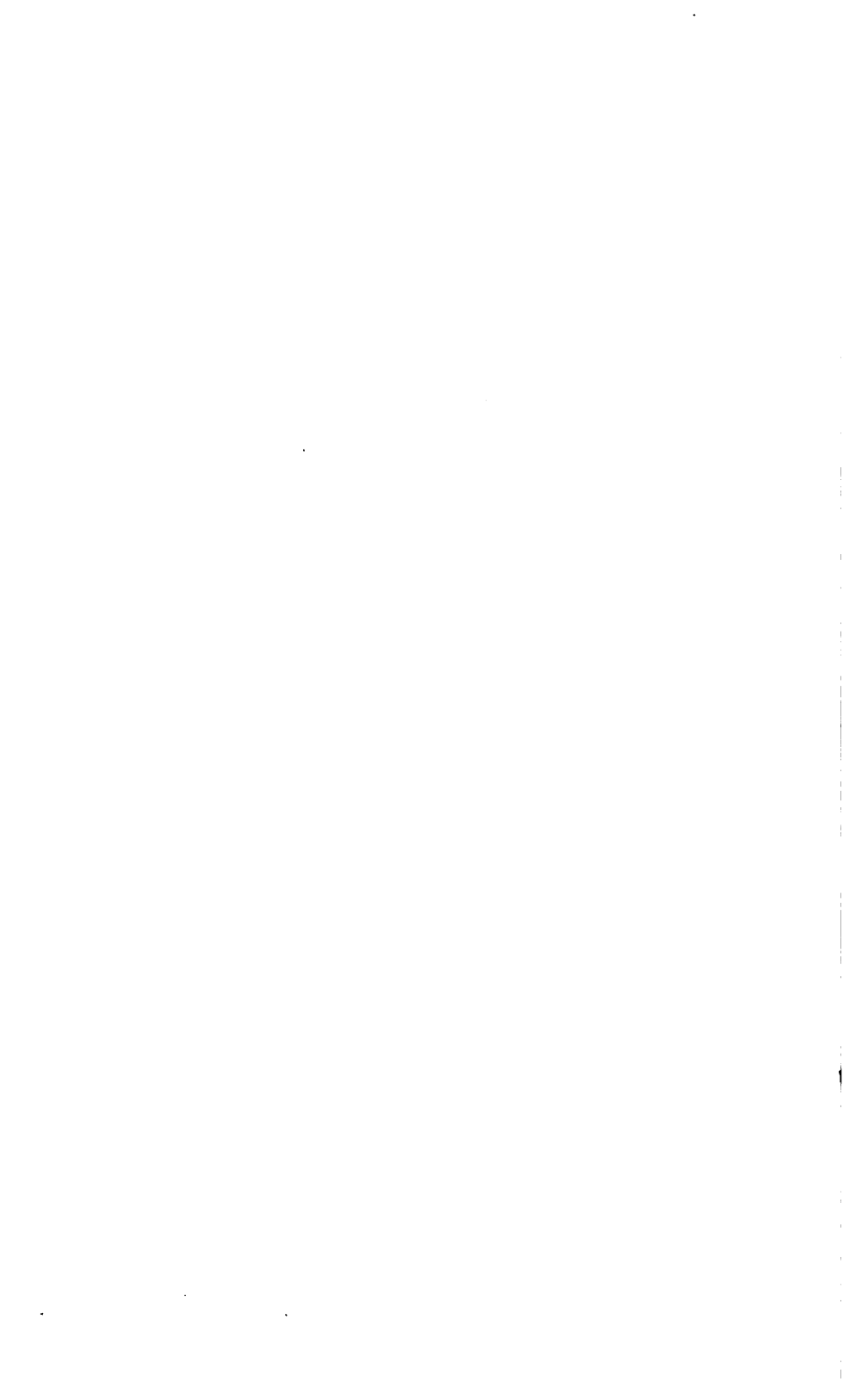
It is the sense of this expectation of this picturesque, or rather, as the French would say, this *bizarre* element on the part of their readers, which renders it so difficult for newspaper or magazine writers to describe such a place, say, as Bethnal Green, where poverty presents a dead level of wretchedness, varied only by slight degrees. The merely verbal difficulty of avoiding the constant recurrence of the same expressions to denote the utter misery of

a neighbourhood is in itself considerable; and in order to secure the public attention the writer must present two or three of the most vivid examples, and honestly endeavour to describe what he sees without allowing any supposed desire for the sensational to influence his judgment.

It is after a visit to the parish just referred to, and deeply impressed with the truth that this weary monotony of dirt and hunger and sickness is the very best proof of the utter destitution of any neighbourhood, that I find myself strolling towards Baldwin's Gardens. The road to Baldwin's Gardens lies between banks of vegetables—cabbages, turnips, carrots, potatoes, and a few (but not many) cauliflowers, and sheep and oxen are displayed in fair proportions at the wayside. To speak of 'strolling,' as I more nearly approach my destination, would be to preserve a fiction for which there is no longer any pretence, since I am hustled hither and thither by a miscellaneous crowd of people representing several distinct nationalities, only a few of whom have any present business with Baldwin's Gardens, but most of whom are busily engaged with the agricultural produce alluded to. The specimens of vegetation are, in fact, piled on stalls or in the long hand-barrows known as 'Whitechapel broughams;' and the animal creation has been reduced to the condition of joints, which hang in bewildering variety outside butchers' shops where the flaring gas-jets whistle a lively accompaniment to the Babel of sounds by which I am surrounded. For my visit to Baldwin's Gardens is made on a Saturday night, and my most direct road is by way of Leather Lane.

I have entered quietly enough by the narrow inlet from Holborn, where I stayed to look at the plaster images standing so cold under the pale gas-light, and to wonder whether a customer would ever appear for the scorbutic doves who have



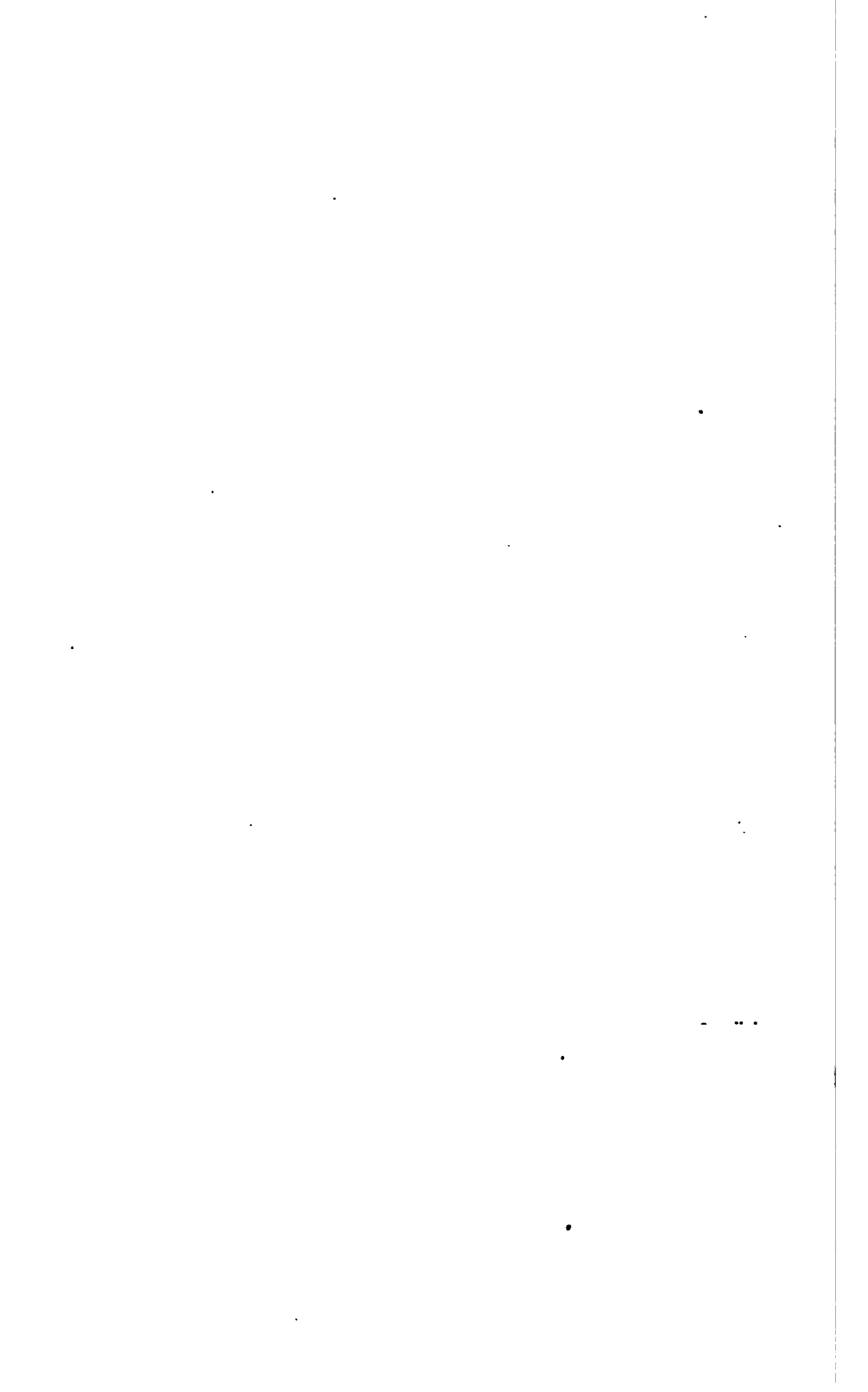




Drawn by W. McConnell.]

SATURDAY NIGHT IN LEATHER LANE.

[See "A Stroll in Baldwin's Gardens."



been so long in flying that now they would be all the better for a good Saturday's scrubbing with soap and water. But this apparent quietude is the peculiarity of Holborn byeways. Of all the neighbourhoods in London these poor districts lying on either side of the great thoroughfare from Newgate to Tyburn are the strangest and the most various; and it is here that we see most distinctly how our 'vast improvements' fail to make a clean sweep, serving at best only to expose the sordid ravellings of that foul tangle of courts and alleys which they were intended to destroy. Starting from the eastern end, where Newgate Gaol has cast its prison blight upon the foul and melancholy dwellings of Snow Hill, we find that the operation which was to have removed Field Lane has but left a great ugly scar, and has at the same time revealed fresh evils in the ends and corners of half-dilapidated houses and frowsy taverns where even dissipation languishes, and from which the very betting men who assemble periodically in the ruinous space depart for more cheerful accommodation. At its western extremity New Oxford Street has failed to remove the vestiges of St. Giles's; and only a few paces from the fashionable library the children still play at mud-pies; while from garret to cellar the foul houses teem with inmates whose half-washed rags flutter from lines stretched across the street.

It is between these two points that the strangest part of all this great city may be discovered, on one side amidst the Inns of Court, on the other in that maze of streets and alleys to which Leather Lane is an approach. Not that poverty here is altogether of that dead, hopeless kind which is so terrible a peculiarity of the wretchedness of some other neighbourhoods. From quiet Hatton Garden, where, by a strangely poetical accident, the City Orthopaedic Hospital occupies the site of the Chancellor's mansion, and the portrait of his dancing lady looks down from the chimney-piece of the Board-room upon restored cripples;—from Hatton Garden, round by

Hatton Wall, and along the wider streets, there may be seen no little bustle even on ordinary week-days, and most of the people there seem to follow some poor calling which enables them to support the hucksters, who ply their trades briskly enough.

Beyond and behind these streets, however, there are close and foul dwellings indeed—tenements let and underlet to scores of lodgers who crowd from garret to basement. First there is the colony of Italian organ-grinders and hurdy-gurdy players, whose head-quarters lie here, and some of whom may be seen toiling wearily home at nightfall from their long day's journey round the suburbs, to deposit their instruments and pay the daily sum demanded either by the master who farms the men or for the hire of their organs. Dark-eyed, stubble-chinned, slouching, often half idiotic, these poor fellows lead a life which surely for monotonous misery could scarcely be surpassed; a few of them are cheerful-looking, but these generally own an organ of their own—a very different case to that of the wretched drudges who are compelled to pay an exorbitant day's hire before they can devour their coarse and scanty supper, and huddle to sleep in their miserable beds.

Then there are itinerant Dutch clock-makers, the German glaziers, the image boys, the plaster-cast makers and modellers, and the Irish of many callings, who swarm in the alleys, and whose lively brogue may be heard at the street corners like the rattling of shille-laghs. The most extraordinary tenements, however, are one or two dilapidated inns which stand, or, rather, which continue to fall, in certain obscure corners lying near the lane itself. They are the remains of the most ruinous old hosteleries ever seen in or out of London, their steps sinking from the battered doorways which formerly led to the gloomy bar where the lady in cherry-coloured ribbons once guarded the punch-bowls and big-labelled bottles while she scored the potatoes of now defunct bagmen on a dingy

slate. That bar is now tenanted by a rod-armed woman in a mob-cap, and an atmosphere of suds; and the coffee-room, where even the greasy odour of past dinners has faded from the blackened walls, and the situation of the 'boxes' is only just indicated by marks upon the floor, is in the occupation of a family, or, perhaps, to judge from their numbers, a couple of families. The private sitting-rooms, the bed-rooms, the half-glazed closet in which the 'boots,' who was also the night-porter, consorted with six flat candlesticks and the blacking-brushes, all, all have been converted into separate lodgings; the gallery, which looks over the space formerly the resort of fast coaches and covered waggons, supports clothes-lines on which dingy garments hang to dry and grow more dingy still; the whole place is so broken, dirty, and dismantled, that the freshly-plastered hotel at a new Railway Station could scarcely exert a more depressing influence.

Even before I have noted these things the uproar in the streets has increased, and the Saturday night's market has commenced in earnest. The great heaps of vegetables are only exceeded by the attractions of the stalls of tin-ware, which flash and glitter under the gaslight of the shops in a way completely dazzling. For the rest, there is an evident tendency on the part of Leather Lane to cheap haberdashery and small hosiery, while second-hand boots, odd pieces of floor-cloth, penny toys, and common crockery-ware alternate with fresh and cured fish in attracting the crowd of customers.

The shopkeepers scarcely seem to object to the hucksters, though they are often in the same line of business—for it would seem that they each have their different classes of purchasers—and to hear the tempting offers made by many of these poor dealers at once suggests how far a little money is compelled to go amongst them. Who does not remember De Quincey's description of his Saturday evening rambles in Clare Market, assisting the poor people to make their purchases?

Fancy the gentle, scholarly 'Opium-eater' exerting that rare conversational power of his, which charmed the select circles of the most literary capital in Europe, upon an obdurate Cockney butcher to cheapen a neck of mutton for some poor woman!

The second-hand clothes, and such general articles as form the sweepings of sales where pawnbrokers' 'unredeemed' pledges are disposed of, are, perhaps, no inconsiderable part of the trade of Leather Lane, though they are confined to only one or two dirty cavernous shops, where nothing seems to have been disturbed from the dust of ages which has settled there. Perhaps the most remarkable stall in the neighbourhood, however, is that devoted to the sale of books, which cover a couple of long boarded barrows at the corner of a street. What have illuminated gift-books, gilded albums in morocco and toned paper, and those handsomely-bound volumes 'without which no gentleman's library can be considered complete,' to do with such a neighbourhood as this? Yet here they are, no doubt cheaply purchased at the publishers' clearing sales, and destined to find their way to the book-cases of the more prosperous tradespeople, or to the shelves of such students as take Leather Lane in the line of their daily peregrinations.

Deeply meditating on this phenomenon, however, I find the place of which I am in search, and a dull and squalid place it is. The houses (of which I observe one is a parochial or district school), faded far beyond the last promise of respectability, bear at first sight so strong a resemblance to some of the depraved buildings in Bethnal Green in the quiet wretchedness of their brick and mortar features, that I am almost ready to return to the cheerful bustle of the poor mart I have left behind, and whose clamour is still audible in those strange surges of sound which denote the vicinity of a crowd. I have arrived, however, at an iron railing, within which a newer and altogether different edifice is indicated; not that I can see more of it than a paved court-yard and an unpretentious

porch; but I have caught a glimpse of its larger proportions—such of them as are not wholly concealed by surrounding houses—during my journey. There is just sufficient light at the entrance to enable me to decipher the inscription on a black board, which in ecclesiastical text informs me that this is the Church of St. Alban the Martyr, and that, beside the Sunday services, it is open every morning and evening for public worship, as well as on some extra occasions there fully set down, *whilst the church itself is open all day long*. As I stoop, from beneath the folds of the curtain which hangs at that porch the distant tumult is heard no more; the squalid poverty surrounding Baldwin's Gardens is shut out, and for a moment forgotten;—forgotten—not that the poor have no part in the scene upon which I have entered, but because of the holy quiet and purity of this free church, which has been given as a blessed heritage for the people of the surrounding districts.

Standing there reverently, and looking upward to that high roof—its graceful arches so suggestive of a purer and serener air—gazing towards the chancel and paintings which decorate its lofty walls—listening with strange emotion to the full swell of the organ, which, as there are no galleries, is placed near the communion space itself, and so seems to have come down to help the congregation in their brother-

liness of Christian worship, I seem to recognize an influence which has resulted from the truest appreciation of what a true church is intended to effect. Who does not remember the pathetic verses in which James Smith (one of the authors of 'Rejected Addresses') inquires why the churches, which are the property of the people, should be barred to them on weekdays, when even the mere visit to the holy place might bring peaceful and penitent thoughts to some amongst the weary and heavy-laden. I think of this, and of the story of that poor, wretched man stained with many crimes, who at length came back to his native place, and creeping stealthily to the church there, sat beneath the painted window, its rays falling on the pavement at his feet, and thought, with bitter repentance and earnest unutterable pleadings, of his wild and wicked life, till he went peacefully to sleep as the golden sunset fell upon him, and so died smiling with the look of childhood on his face. Of both of these I think fitfully, but gravely, after I have once more passed that curtain at the porch of St. Alban the Martyr, and again emerge into the roar and bustle of Leather Lane on that Saturday night. There are flowers of promise even in the wild waste of Baldwin's Gardens; and in that Holy Rood which it encloses, much fruit may be ripening for the gathering in of the Great Harvest.



O, DON'T BECOME A NUN, MY DEAR.

[On seeing a young lady at a fancy ball in the costume of a Sister of Charity.]

I.

O DON'T you become a nun, my dear,
 But leave your beauty free;—
 Of vows pr'ythee make but one, my dear,
 And make that one to me!
 Whenever you wish to 'confess,' my dear,
 Be this tender heart your shrine;
 For you never will find, I guess, my dear,
 So loving a heart as mine!

II.

They tell me you want to become, my dear,
 A Sister of Charity;
 But before you set off from home, my dear,
 Let your mission begin with me!
 Though the wounded limb may smart, my dear,
 And the pulse be too wildly stirred,
 What are they to the wounded heart, my dear,
 Or the sickness of hope deferred!

III.

Then, howe'er you incline to roam, my dear,
 Don't forget that your charity
 Should sometimes begin at home, my dear,
 So let it begin with me!
 If Indulgences ever you need, my dear,
 You have only how many to say,
 And if blessings your bliss can speed, my dear,
 You'll be happy by night and by day!

IV.

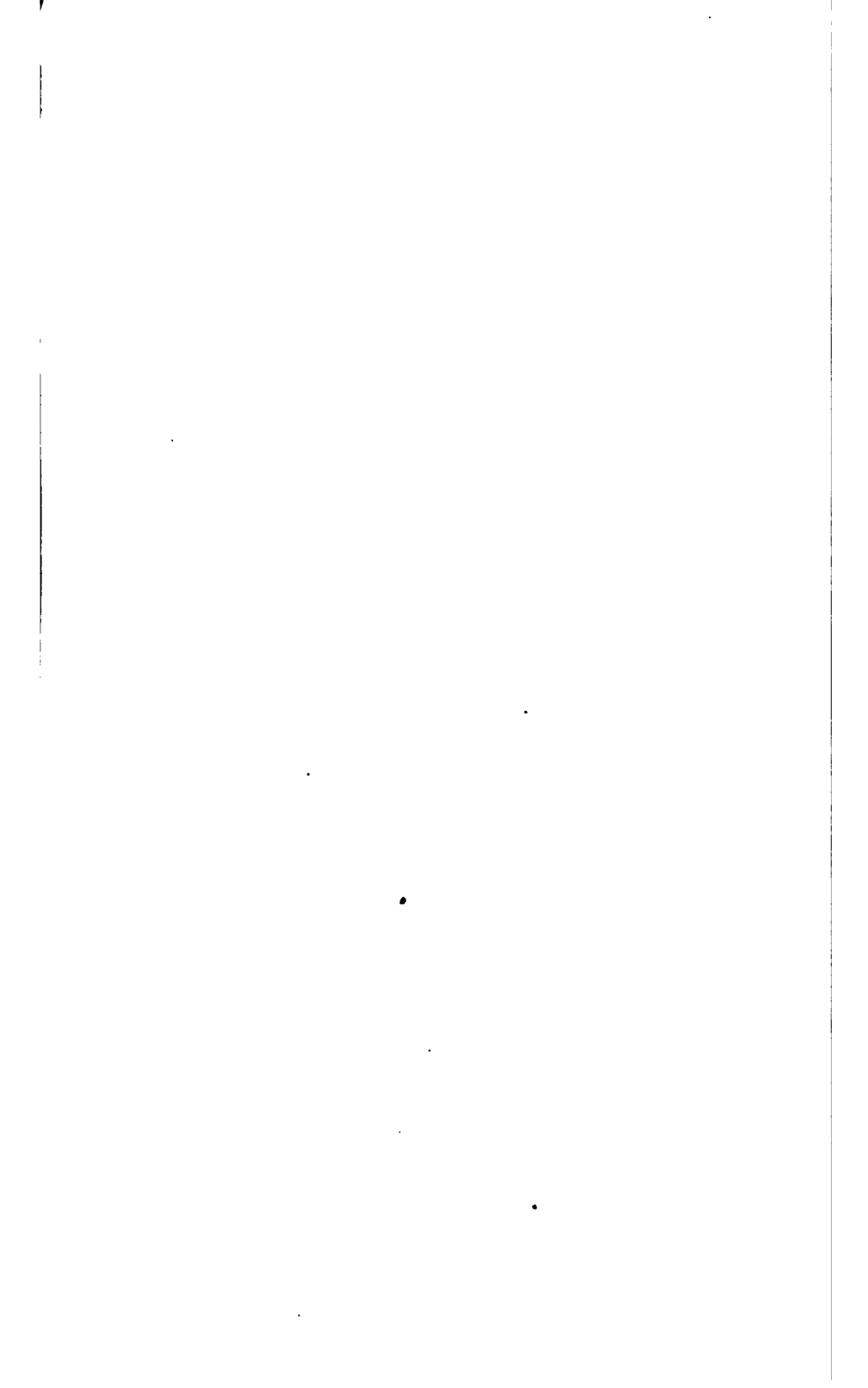
E'en the world with its cares and strifes, my dear,
 Is a school it is easy to see,
 And if vows you would make for your life, my dear,
 Pr'ythee make them at once to me!
 The bliss for which oftenest I sigh, my dear!
 Is to thine my fate to tether,
 To live on, in one faith, till we die, my dear,
 And then travel to Heaven together.



Drawn by H. Sanderson.]

O! DON'T BECOME A NUN, MY DEAR!

[See the Poem.



THE ORDEAL FOR WIVES.

A Story of London Life.

By THE AUTHOR OF 'THE MORALS OF MAYFAIR.'

CHAPTER XXXIV.

DOUBLY FALSE.



RS. SCOTT and Miss Dashwood had gone out to a dinner-party, and would not be at home till eleven, was the welcome that awaited Esther in her new home. Would Miss Fleming have the goodness to go upstairs at once, and have her tea in Miss Natty's nursery?

Miss Natty's nursery—so Mr. Scott will it—was the best room in the

house; and on entering it Esther at once saw, in the minute appointments, the pictured walls, the costly carpeted floor, that some one had Miss Natty's personal comforts at heart. Was it her stepmother? As she looked round for the little baby face she had prepared herself to see, a small woman—a woman, judging from her height, of about four years old, but with cool, worldly manners, and a firm, unembarrassed step—approached from a low chair by the fireside, and extended to her its minute hand.

'Mrs. Scott and Miss Dashwood are out. Come near the fire; you must be frozen after your long journey.'

And then two sharp black eyes commenced a deliberate inventory of every detail of Miss Fleming's dress, of every line of her face; an inventory such as only one of these terrible children can take; and which, while the victim is ashamed visibly to writhe under it, he feels to be more remorselessly correct than any which a grown man or woman, with ever so much knowledge of the world, would have the capacity to take.

'I hope you will love me, Natty, dear. I am quite prepared to love you.'

Miss Scott gave a short laugh; a laugh not in the slightest degree ill-bred, but such a one as you might imagine some very used-up cynic bestowing upon a ludicrously-gushing, although possibly good-hearted, country gentleman who should proffer the tender to him of eternal friendship.

'I like all the world, Mademoiselle Fleming. We shall be the best of friends, I am sure.' And Natty looked between Esther's brows, and reading there more than she liked of determination, vowed to herself to kick her upon the earliest occasion when they should enter together upon the delicate intricacies of words in three letters. 'My dear mamma—ah, there are more than two years she is dead—taught me to love all the world. I don't remember her, mademoiselle; but I have seen—seen *où elle dort*, in Père la Chaise, and a little white boy, with only a chemise on, holding his hands so! above his head. The day before we left, you know, papa and I, he took me there, and it was very damp, and papa wouldn't step on the grass, and he walked up and down and he smoked, oh, a very long time—five minutes, tout au moins—on the gravel walk before mamma; and then I cried, and he took me to the bonbon shop, and gave me a boxful—a pink

box, with a real little looking-glass inside the lid, and such good bonbons avec de la crème, mademoiselle—how do you say it? crème inside the chocolats, and that lovely stuff that brings tears to your eyes, du rhum, n'est ce pas?—in the little rose and white dragées. Mademoiselle, have you been in Paris? I have been there four, five times, and in Vienna, too. Our courier in Vienna was—was allerliebst! Ah, bon Dieu, if I had only got poor Carl here!

And then the good temper vanished abruptly out of Natty's face, and she turned away with the air of one who evidently held life to be a very poor, mistaken, used-up affair, indeed, to the fire.

Jane Dashwood's letter had not prepared Esther to find an angel in Marmaduke Scott's child; but for anything so old, so knowing, so upsetting of all her early legends respecting childish innocence as this fraction of a human being, she was unprepared.

'I haven't been in Paris, Natty,' she remarked, when, later, they were sitting together at tea; the child quaintly doing the honours to the best of her small powers; 'I haven't been in Paris; but I have lived in a place that I'm sure you'd like a great deal better—a farmhouse in the country, with a garden, and under one of the trees in the garden a swing. What should you say to that?'

'I have swung in the Jardin Mabille, and it made me ill at my heart. It was Easter Sunday, and Carl took me there; and while he went to dance with Mademoiselle Zizine, a man took me up and called me his angel, and treated me to a swing—out of goodness, you understand—and it made me ill, like the steamer. I've been to a farmhouse, too. I've seen as much as you. A farmhouse at Hampstead, and Polly and I and a gentleman had strawberries and cream there. Va donc, mademoiselle! where else have you been?'

'To school, Natty; a place I'm sure you have not been to. I was at school with your mamma.'

'You mean Milly. She's not my mamma. Watson says so. My

mamma's in Père la Chaise; and it's a good thing for her; a very good thing!' Natty nodded her head significantly.

'Child, who teaches you to say such things?' Esther asked. 'Why is it a good thing that your mamma is dead?'

'She wouldn't be happy if she was alive. People ain't happy when they fight; and Watson told cook papa quarrelled with my real mamma just as bad as he does with this one. Every time they come from a party they quarrel—oh, they quarrel so that I heard them one night from my room; and Milly doesn't speak the truth to papa, Miss Fleming. One day she said Mr. Mortimer hadn't been here, and he had been here all the afternoon, and I told papa so—I did!' and about five small demons flashed out of Natty's eyes; 'Milly didn't dare punish me then, because of papa; but next day she came in the nursery and made Polly dress me in my old green frock, when Dick Lawson was coming to tea. I hate her for it, that I do; and when I'd a new white one, with a dear little blue ruche all round the skirt! and whenever Mr. Mortimer comes I'll tell papa again, that I will!'

To turn the child from herself, her own loves, her own hates, her own dresses, would have been simply as impossible as to have turned Milly Dashwood, in days gone by, from her loves, and hates, and dresses. For frivolity, for worldliness, for selfishness, Natty might have done perfect credit to Millicent as her own daughter; and, even while she launched forth her tiny shafts most bitterly against her step-mother, Esther could scarce forbear from smiling at the child's instinctive appreciation of all the leading and congenial points in Mrs. Scott's character. Natty was obviously not to be pitied, according to the old sentimental way of pitying step-children. It would, all her life, be a good stand-up fight between her and whomsoever should be put in authority over her, just as it was virtually a stand-up fight now between Millicent and her husband.

'And well for her so!' thought

Esther, when she went, later, to look at the child asleep, and marked the resolute expression of the poor little round infantine features. 'Well for her, well for this little child, well for all women who have got it born in them not to suffer for any one, not to love any one but themselves.'

And then she betook herself to the window and leant her face against the pane, and tried to choke back her tears as she wondered how many miles Paul was from her at that moment? and with whom he was? and whether he had bought the bouquet of white flowers that day? with all the other questions which that delicious passion, under whose dominion she was, is in the habit of alternately fevering and chilling the hearts of its unhappy victims.

Between eleven and twelve o'clock the Scotts and Jane returned. As Mrs. Scott was very fatigued, however; had fainted, or intended to faint, or something of that kind; and Mr. Scott was in the sulky condition normal to him after all parties, Esther Fleming, much to her own relief, was informed that she would not be required to come down to the drawing-room that evening.

'Don't think it unkind,' cried Jane, who had rushed up at once, in her warm impulsive way, and borne Esther off to her own room. 'Milly really isn't strong—indeed, it would be much better for her if she didn't go to parties at all—and Mr. Scott is so fearfully cross, I don't wonder at her not wishing you to get your first impression of him to-night. Esther, whatever else Lord Feltham may turn out, I hope he won't be sulky. I could stand any other form of temper, but even from a man I didn't love I could not stand sulkiness. If Feltham takes it into his head to sulk like dear Marmy I shall run away from him in three months.'

'But is it real, Jane?' and Esther looked earnestly into her face. 'Is it all in real sober earnest? You are going to marry him?'

'Real! I should rather think so!' but her laugh was hollow. 'Wait till you see his letters, his trinkets.

Sober earnest? 'Oh, Esther, if you knew all I have had to go through—all that I go through still!'

She seized Esther's hand between her own two feverish ones, and kissed her in that passionate way which, coming from one woman to another, tells so indisputably that some strong emotion concerning a man must be the latent motive-power. 'I am glad you have come. I want you. I want some one that I need tell no lies to: some one that I can really talk to for the short time that will be mine about—about Arthur. Esther, I have seen him to-night. He knew I was to be at the Dalzells, and he actually walked round from his club, and met me at the door, as I was going to the carriage, this cold winter night! He doesn't come to the house, you know—Mr. Scott won't have it, horrible bear! now that I am engaged—but he meets me everywhere; when we walk, when we go out to parties, to the theatre. Do you think that looks as if he was going to marry Miss Lynes? Speak what you think, please, quite plainly. I'm accustomed to all disappointments.'

'I didn't know that Arthur Peel was even said to be engaged to Miss Lynes, Jane; but I think the fact of your being engaged should be enough to make him leave off paying you attention; and I think Mr. Scott acts honourably to Lord Feltham in not allowing him to come to the house.'

'Honourably!' cried Jane, with a little, hard laugh. 'What a word to apply to the thought or actions of any man, in as far as women are concerned! Vanity, selfishness, falseness—those are the qualities I recognise, only in different degrees, in all men. Mr. Scott is intensely selfish, and thinks it for his advantage, socially, that his sister-in-law should remain true to an eligible suitor. Lord Feltham is intensely vain, and vanity made him wish to be the owner of my well-looking face, and to cut Arthur out. For Arthur himself—'

She sank her head down, wearily, against the mantelpiece; and then, looking again at the lines of that lovely face in repose, Esther knew

that it had changed from what it used to be. Miss Dashwood had not grown thin to the point which takes from beauty. The round, fair cheek, the exquisitely-modelled chin and throat were there, in all the perfect softness that must belong to a blonde Englishwoman of less than two-and-twenty; and yet, despite all the brilliant bloom and rounded lines, the face *had* oldened visibly during the last twelve months. Of passion as strong as her nature could feel, Jane had had ample experience ever since she was seventeen; but, whatever some moralists may say, it is not passion, it is the renouncement of passion, which really hardens the heart and lines the face. Since her engagement, Jane Dashwood had striven to efface Arthur Peel from her heart; had striven, in her way, to be true to the man she meant to marry; and these two or three months of her engagement had made her older and more miserable than so many years of the former life, with all its excess of hopeless but unstruggling passion would have done.

'Jane, I think you have done very wrong in accepting Lord Feltham.'

'Esther, I have done very right in accepting Lord Feltham. Such a life as mine has been for the last three years *can't* go on for ever. Very few women marry the man they are insane enough to love first, and the few who do are not overhappy in their lives, I hear. I shall never marry Arthur Peel—never, never, never!' She raised up her face, and looked—oh, with what a look!—into Esther's eyes. 'It was a dream, and he was never worthy of me, and if I had married him both of us would have been miserable in six months. I know all that, and I know, too, that love—even the very maddest love—can't drag on through a divided existence for ever. One can live down everything, and the best way to live love down is by marrying. I am fortunate in being engaged to Feltham, because he has money—money and position, of both of which, as I grow older, I shall be fond; and, besides, if I had not married him I should

certainly have married some one else. *Lui ou un autre!*—it matters little. I shall be a good average wife; the better for knowing so well beforehand what life and all its temptations are; and you are very mistaken, Esther, in thinking that I have acted wrongly. Wait till you see me as Lord Feltham's wife, and then tell me whether he and I are not both to be envied.'

'And the conclusion of your letter to me, Jane, where you spoke of some poor wretch making her way through the night to the river, and said for very little you would change your fate with hers?'

Miss Dashwood laughed the question off; began to talk of Millicent's marriage, of Mr. Scott, of the child, of her own parties and successes—finally of Paul.

'You are as fatally far gone upon him as ever, Esther, I presume? If you are, I can look him up for you at once. You know, of course, that he and Lord Feltham are half-brothers?'

'Paul Chichester and Lord Feltham? Great heavens, Jane! are you in earnest?'

'Why, you don't mean to say you did not know it before? I took it for granted you did when I first wrote to announce my engagement. They are brothers, but have not met for years and years. One day, when I was talking to Lord Feltham, I mentioned Paul's name accidentally, and then out it all came. Amusing to have been engaged to them both, one in joke, the other in earnest, eh?'

All the story, the dark hints respecting Paul that Mrs. Tudor had given her at Weymouth, came back, sudden and clear, upon Esther's mind, and her heart died within her at this threatened confirmation of their truth.

'Are you quite sure the estrangement was all Paul's fault?' she stammered. 'Did Lord Feltham give you no details of the family quarrels?'

'Well, Esther, dear, to tell you the honest truth, I wasn't interested enough in anything belonging to them to ask many questions, even if I had thought it discreet to do so,

which I did not. When young men break with their relations in that determined sort of manner, 'tis not difficult to guess what kind of reason lies at the bottom of it all; indeed, Lord Feltham more than hinted that Paul had been entangled—hopelessly entangled—ever since, and was so now. I didn't like Paul a bit the less for it, mind, nor his brother the better for his look of conscious superiority as he told me; but it was in quite the early days of our engagement, when everything, of course, *must* be rose-coloured and charming, and as I saw the subject was not an agreeable one, I just said that I had known Mr. Chichester slightly, and let it drop.

'And Paul—Mr. Chichester—did he and Lord Feltham ever meet in this house?'

'No. I happened to see Paul a night or two afterwards at the Opera—the only public place at which one ever meets him—and then I told him—Lord Feltham happily was not with me—of my engagement. From that day till this he has never been near the house, but now, with his brother away (I told you, did I not, that Lord Feltham had gone to Corfu? He does not sell out till the spring, and by my express wish rejoined his regiment in the interval) and with you here, no doubt we shall begin to see Paul's face again; that is, if dear Marmy should happen to approve of his visits. You have no idea what a jealous monster that is, Esther. Poor Milly has only got to speak to any man twice, and Mr. Scott insults him if he comes to the house. What should you do if you were married to such a wretch? I should simply run away, *coûte que coûte*. Life is too short to be spent in fighting any man.'

'Life is too short to be spent in loving any man!' cried Miss Fleming, bitterly. 'Jane, are all men unprincipled, I wonder, and all women fools?'

'Most undoubtedly they are, in their relations to each other,' said Miss Dashwood, with cool emphasis, 'and every year that you live you will come to know it with greater certainty. All men are unworthy—

wholly unworthy—of anything like true or honest love; all women are fools enough, once or twice in their lives, to be really in love, except, perhaps, women of the Mrs. Strangeways' stamp; and what they must go through in wounded vanity I dare say quite equals the torment of other people's foolish attachments. The happy state, I am convinced of it, Esther, is to be not one atom in love with the man you marry; for him to be fond—not ridiculously or jealously fond—of you, and also to possess a great taste and great capacity for constantly making you all sorts of nice expensive presents. This is my state now, and if I could only get over my old folly thoroughly, I should be really happy. Grandes passions were never really intended for silly little women like Milly and me. They require height, as these new wreaths do, to carry them off. By-the-way, what do you think of this tiara I have on? It is an awfully grand one, you must know, made out of some of the Feltham diamonds. Do you think a tiara coming so much to the front of the head becomes me or not?'

Now Esther was not one whit disposed to talk of wreaths or tiaras, or any other kind of head-dress. Her heart was bitter within her: bitter against Paul for the fresh confirmation of the guilty secret, whatever it was, that bound him to his strange and suspected life; bitter against him because he *had*, after all, been going to the Opera, living, enjoying himself as usual, while she had been wasting her heart in foolish dreams at Countisbury; bitter against him because—because she loved him. Can I assign to her any better reason? But when do women, the simplest, the worst-trained among them, betray to each other this particular phase of suffering—the first, the keenest, perhaps, of all: suspicion without the right to be suspicious; jealousy without the right to be jealous? She thought dear Jane looked very well indeed with a tiara coming so much to the front of the head; and what beautiful brilliants they were! and how well they contrasted with the sweet simplicity of

that little gold bracelet upon Jane's arm!

'The first present poor Arthur ever gave me!' cried Miss Dashwood. 'See, here's the date inside, and when you touch that spring, a little piece of his hair and of mine. Do you think it will be right for me to keep it when I am married? Right or wrong, I shall do so. There are some few things it would just kill me to part from, and this is one of them.'

She put the bracelet between Esther's hands, then walked up to the toilet-table, took off her tiara, her necklace, her rings, and pushed them all aside with a quick impatient gesture into a heap.

'I hope you'll never know the sensation of having sold yourself, Esther. It's not an elevating one. When I am dressed in Lord Feltham's jewels, and meet Arthur, as I did to-night, I ask myself how much better I am than any of the women of another class whom we have been taught to regard as lost, in this world and the next? My sale is for life, certainly; but I don't see that the length of the term can make any moral difference. The sale—the motives of the sale—remain the same.'

'No, no, Jane; that is your passionate, one-sided way of viewing your own conduct. You intend, once married to Lord Feltham, to be true and faithful to him, and to banish Arthur Peel from your heart. If you did not really at heart mean to be true, to the best of your ability, your conscience would not prick you as it does about this little bracelet. No one who was going to do a very great wrong could be troubled by the thought of a small infidelity.'

Miss Dashwood made no answer. Possibly she thought Esther's arguments weak; possibly she thought the whole subject one of those which do not gain much by ventilation. 'I think I am very selfish in keeping you up after your long journey,' she began, when both had remained silent for some minutes; 'but before we say good-night, there is just one thing I should like to tell you—something about Lord

Feltham. Would you mind staying one quarter of an hour longer to hear it?'

'No; I would like to stay. This arm-chair and warm fire make me disinclined to go away. Has it anything to do—I mean, has it any—any connection with Paul Chichester?'

'None at all, Esther.' And Miss Dashwood came and put her hand kindly round the girl's neck. 'Let me give you a bit of very sincere advice—don't love Paul. When he first went away from me to you in Bath, I was a little bit jealous; I don't mind confessing it; and that hindered me, perhaps, from warning you as heartily as I ought to have done about the danger you ran in being intimate with him. He can never marry; he has told me so himself; others, his own brother even, have told me that he is irrevocably bound for life. Why should you care for him? You are young, you are handsome, the world is full of people who only need to know you to like you. Why should you go and fix your heart upon a broken-down, penniless man like Paul Chichester? These things can't be undone afterwards, Esther; the outset is the time for the struggle. Resolutely keep your mind from Paul. When his face, when his voice *will* come before you, get up, read, talk, rush away out of the room, out of the house, anything to escape from yourself. It is not the man himself, you know, it is your own imagination that makes you in love up to a certain point—the point after which no effort can save you any more! Esther, you are too good to waste your life as I have done. Take my advice. I am as old as a woman of thirty in everything to do with the bitter folly of love. Take my advice; give up thinking of Paul. He is not worthy of you!'

'I don't want him to be worthy,' said Esther; but she shielded the firelight away nervously with her hands. 'He is no more to me than any other man. I am going to teach little Natty; I am going, heart and soul, to attend to my duties. No fear of my dreaming of him or of any one else; I shall have no

time. And, besides, Mr. Chichester does not care one atom for me. He liked me as a man of that age might like an unformed, plain, country girl at Bath, nothing more. It is nearly a year since I saw him, and he hasn't even written me one line in all these weary months.'

And then her voice stopped with singular unphilosophical abruptness, and the great tears gathered slowly in her eyes.

Miss Dashwood looked at her with genuine pity. To her—and she really had had ample experience—no possible misery could be so great for a woman as to love without fortune. Even while she was mad enough still to care for Arthur Peel, all her opinions respecting love were cynical, hard, worldly, as Milly's. She had no belief in the worthiness of any man. Of Paul Chichester's real character she could not form half so true an estimate as Esther, in her innate childish longing to believe in another's goodness, had done. He was poor, embarrassed, living on evil terms with his family—what should make him thus but the same class of selfish vices of which she had seen so many samples among the Peels and dozens of others? All men, according to the Dashwood creed, were vicious; all men were natural enemies; to be vanquished and discomfited by all weapons, and with the least possible risk to the vanquisher. And Jane had enough *esprit de corps*—perhaps enough real generosity—to feel genuine regret as she looked in Esther's face and read there that one who should have been a victor was already among the ranks of the slain. Lost far more irrevocably than she had been with all her love and madness for Arthur. For Esther she dimly and yet intuitively felt was a woman who would love for life!

She had too much knowledge to launch another direct shaft against Paul; but as the tears slowly swept away from Esther's eyes she began to speak of Lord Feltham; and to speak of any man was, in Miss Dashwood's present mood, to denounce the whole race as false, unworthy, perjured.

'Before I had been engaged to him a week, he began, with the accustomed fine sense of honour of men, to tell me of his last love-affair, and of all that it had cost—not himself, but his beloved—when the affair was broken off. It is about this that I want to tell you, Esther, just to hear what idea you take from it of my *fiancé's* character. She was a most worthy person, according to his making out; one, I am sure, far more likely to suit him than I shall ever be—sincere, simple, outspoken: something, I should fancy, both in mind and face, like yourself, Esther.'

Esther looked up quickly. The very idea was void of reason, and yet—and yet a sharp pang of suspicion did, involuntarily, contract her heart.

'And where was the first romance acted out, Jane? Who was this simple, sincere, outspoken person, of whom you are the successor?'

'Oh, those were just the things he would not tell me,' replied Miss Dashwood. 'It all took place about a year and a half ago—the summer before last, I think. He went to some wild country place for fishing—in Wales, I believe—and met a well-looking young farmer's daughter one morning gazing at herself in a stream, and she fell in love with him on the spot—this part, naturally, was shadowed forth rather than put into words—and then all the commonplace story followed, as a matter of course.'

'And the farmer's daughter offered to marry him, I suppose?' suggested Miss Fleming; but as she spoke she turned her face quickly away into shadow. 'And out of sheer pity he was forced to consent. Is that the end of the story?'

'Well, not exactly. No man, even as vain a one as Feltham, has the face quite to make such an assertion as that; it carries its falsehood written too palpably upon the surface. The farmer's daughter was wildly, passionately in love, and carried away by country air and compassion, his lordship, in a rash moment, asked her to become his wife.'

'What a noble piece of generosity!'

'Then came the parting. He was ordered away suddenly to join his regiment, which was supposed to be under orders for India (pity it has not gone there, Esther! I believe, at this moment, I could get up a little morsel of sentiment about him, if I thought he was being killed upon a field of battle instead of snipe-shooting at Corfu), and the poor disconsolate Phillis was left to mourn. Well, can you guess what first began to wake him to his folly? Not meeting some one worthier of him, not calmly reasoning over his weakness, but the poor girl's own letters.'

Esther gave one little instinctive start of surprise. 'They were badly spelt, no doubt,' she cried. 'The faulty orthography revolted against Lord Feltham's delicate sense of refinement.'

'That's what I thought, and I asked him to show me one.'

'Go on, Jane.'

'And he refused to do so. How interested you look, Esther! Have you got to that point in which any account of men's small basenesses has especial interest for you? I sincerely hope not. It would not be exactly honourable, you know, to show one woman's love-letters to another, although it is perfectly honourable to boast of having gained, then cast aside, her heart. However, though he did not—most probably could not—produce them, Lord Feltham was able to give me a very fair idea of the nature of his first love-letters. He gets none such from me, I can answer for it.'

'So badly expressed, do you mean?'

'So full of generous feeling, of honest confidence, Esther. Little though he meant me to think so, this poor country girl was, I am convinced, far above her lover both in heart and brain. All the jealous misgivings of her own heart, all her fears that she did not really love him in the way a woman should love the man she marries, were poured out in these letters, and what do you suppose was the result?'

'"For the sake of my own word I would have married her," his lordship confided to me, "and having once passed that word no consideration of her lowly birth or want of fortune would, for one moment, have had weight. But her letters frightened me. I could stand any form of temper, I could reconcile myself to indifference, but a woman with a passionate, exacting, self-questioning, self-torturing disposition would just drive me wild. These fine characters for a play or novel are the ones to make a man like me utterly wretched in domestic life." He wasn't quick enough to see how poor the compliment was that he implied to me by such a speech, and you may be sure no look or word of mine enlightened him; but I did feel, Esther, yes, I did, how small he was! How great a fool to have given up a woman who could love him, how thoroughly little to be able to speak of her like this to her successor!'

'He has only lately succeeded to his title, you say?' and Esther's voice was singularly low and unmoved as she asked this.

'Only about a year ago, but, to do him justice, I don't believe that that, or any worldly consideration, had anything to do with his breaking off his engagement. He was summoned back hastily to England to attend his cousin's death-bed; went, as a matter of course, to see his lady-love; as a matter of course—the cooling process having been once set up—was more utterly *disillusionné* the moment he did see her, and one fine morning or winter evening, I forget which, found himself Lord Feltham and a free man at about the same moment.'

'His name before then was—?'

'Carew, of course. The Honourable Oliver Carew. I remember quite well dancing with him two or three seasons ago, and wondering whether the raw material would ever come into anything like shape as it got older. Little I thought then I should have anything to do with the shaping of it! You have never seen his photograph, have you? Let me get it for you, and say whether it is astonishing that

any poor little simple country girl should go near to breaking her heart for such an Adonis!

Miss Dashwood went to her dressing-table, took a small case from it, and put a portrait into Esther's hands. Oliver Carew's portrait.

Miss Fleming looked at it quite calmly; listened to Jane Dashwood's running commentaries upon its defects and beauties; and gave not the faintest visible sign of emotion as she did so. Very few men possess this kind of courage: all women do. It is the instinct of concealment given by nature for self-preservation to the weaker creature: nothing more. All a mistake to call it either superior power of endurance or superior capacity for deceit. In supreme moments, and with one of her own sex present, any woman can conceal, or act, or feign any passion whatsoever, and this without effort, almost without consciousness of her own. The beetles who extend their feet in the air, and pretend death when you touch them, don't, I fancy, go through any process of mental or moral ratiocination prior to that action.

'He seems to have good eyes, Jane, and rather a nice mouth. I admire Lord Feltham.'

'Because you have never seen him. His photograph is handsomer than himself, as is always the case with men of tolerably straight features and no mind, no expression. Do you think him handsomer than Paul, for example?'

'They bear no comparison. As far as feature goes, Lord Feltham might be considered the best-looking.'

'And how do you judge of him after what I have just told you? He must have a great deal of delicacy, of generosity, must he not, to choose me for his confessor on such a theme?'

'I have no doubt there are many men who would do the same. Vanity, desire even to appear well with you, might make him lightly betray the confidence of this unknown country girl. And, besides—but here her voice did falter a little

—'you don't say that she wished him to be faithful. He did not tell you that the infidelity was wholly on his side?'

Jane Dashwood laughed; and, although the whole matter was disconnected with Paul, disconnected with the man she loved, Esther felt she almost hated her for that light laugh—so hard is it for any woman to see even a rejected lover in the keeping of another.

'As I have told you so much, Esther, I may as well tell you all. The story isn't a particularly interesting one to you or to me, still it is a good illustration of the truth of what I said to you, that any man is unworthy of the honest love of any woman. This country girl, whose name even I don't know, evidently loved Lord Feltham a thousand times better than I or any one else will ever love him while he lives. He tired of her—tired of the very strength of her exacting honest love—broke with her when his coldness had roused her temper to the utmost, and then told me, her accidental successor, every particular of the love affair! He did more. I hate him for it. He gave me a relic of hers! You shall see it. I can't bear to have it in my possession. According to my weak faulty code of honour there is treachery in my ever having seen it. What do you say? Your ideas are fresher and truer than mine in these things.'

She went to a bureau, and presently took from it a little packet which she gave into Esther's hand. 'Open it and look, Esther, there is nothing much to see. "Only a woman's hair," only a woman's ribbon, you know. The old, old story.'

Esther opened and found—a little blue silk neck-tie, one she had worn that last night when they were together on the moors, and which Oliver's urgent prayers had made her yield to him as they parted at the garden gate.

'He gave you this!' she cried. 'It was false! it was very false!'

'And, indirectly, it contradicted his own account,' said Miss Dashwood. 'No girl, not the most ignorant, the most forward, ever gave

such a gift as that to a man unless he sued for it. Don't misunderstand me, however,' she added, 'by thinking that Lord Feltham brought his love-tokens to me, and boasted of them in cold blood. Of that, I should hope, for his own sake, even his vanity is incapable. As far as the ribbon first coming into my hands goes, I must confess it was my fault. I was in a miserable temper one day (it was quite early in my engagement, and Arthur had met us together and congratulated me, poor fellow! without a quiver on his lips), a temper in which the only hope of distraction lies in making some one else as miserable as oneself, and so when Feltham wanted to begin the accustomed love-making I drew myself away from him—that I always do in spirit, mind, if not openly—and told him I was convinced he did not really care an atom for me, that his heart was with his first pastoral, simple love, and so on. You know—no, you don't know, the kind of way one has of tormenting, without really alienating, any man who is fool enough to be tormented. He listened to me a long time without being much moved; at last, when I had said something very bitter, he jumped up and the blood flew into his foolish face, and he asked me, very hot and nervous, how he could prove to me that he loved me, and that my suspicions were wrong. "Give me up whatever relics you possess of your first foolish love," I cried. "Not the letters, for it would bore me to death even to look at them, but everything else. I won't believe you care for me if you don't promise to give up all the girl's presents to me at once."

'He looked irresolute, so I held my handkerchief to my face, and then—well then, naturally, he promised. He had but one relic, he said, one poor and worthless gift, which it would have been better for him to have destroyed with his own hands; however, as I wished it, I should have it, and I had it, of course, that night. Esther, how I hate weakness in men! A man of common honesty ought to have

given me up sooner than have let me touch what had belonged to another woman. Don't you think so?'

But Esther made no answer. She was not in a condition to speak. Not alone her faith in Oliver—that had never been strong—but her belief in all love, her hope in life, her faith in Paul, seemed ebbing from her fast, as she sat there with her own little faded neck-ribbon in her hand. Even as her first girlish love had been betrayed and died, so, a voice seemed to say to her, would her present one. And love was her life; and all the feelings at which Jane Dashwood sneered were the feelings she considered holiest and best worth possessing; and if this new creed were really true and the old one hollow, she felt it would be a very good thing indeed just to die at this moment with the little relic of her girlish life in her hand, and the passion so warm and strong and full of vitality yet in her heart. If she lived and found Paul worthless, what should hinder her from becoming like Miss Dashwood or Mrs. Scott?

'You are half-asleep, Esther,' broke in Jane's voice, 'and it is just like my selfishness to keep you here listening to things about which you cannot possibly feel any interest. Go off to your bed, dear,' and she leant over and kissed the girl's flushed cheek; 'you ought to have been there two hours ago at least—only just tell me before you go what you think I ought to do with poor Phillis's neck-ribbon?'

'Burn it,' said Esther, curtly. 'If you like I will do it for you.' And she rose and held her hand out to the fire.

'I—well—' Miss Dashwood hesitated; 'perhaps it is best so after all; Lord Feltham is not likely ever to ask me for the thing again.'

'Not at all likely,' returned Esther, with a laugh; 'he regarded it simply as a trophy of the woman who had loved him, not as a relic of the woman he had loved. Let us hope that Phillis has outlived the remembrance of her folly as utterly as he has.'

And then she dropped the ribbon

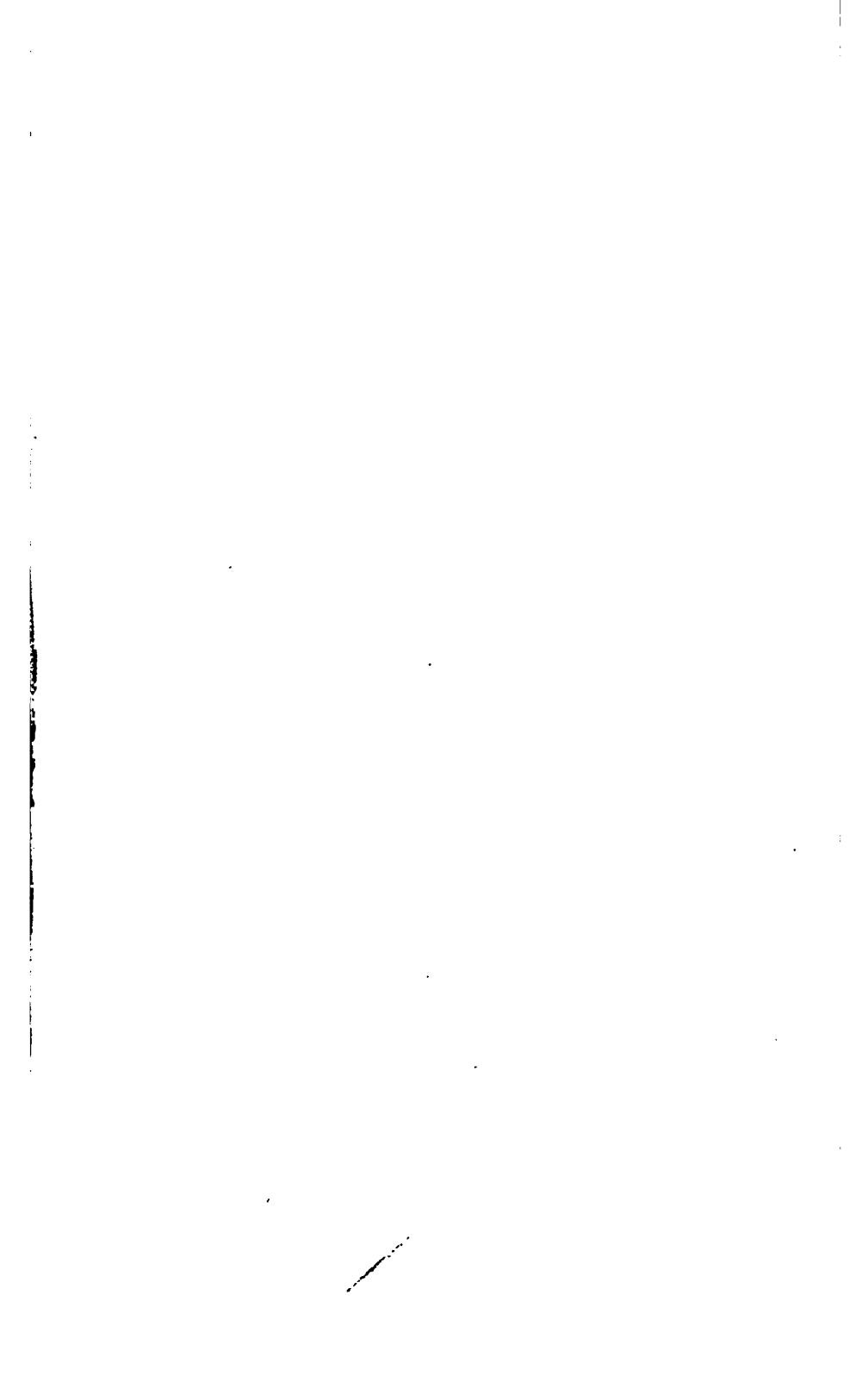


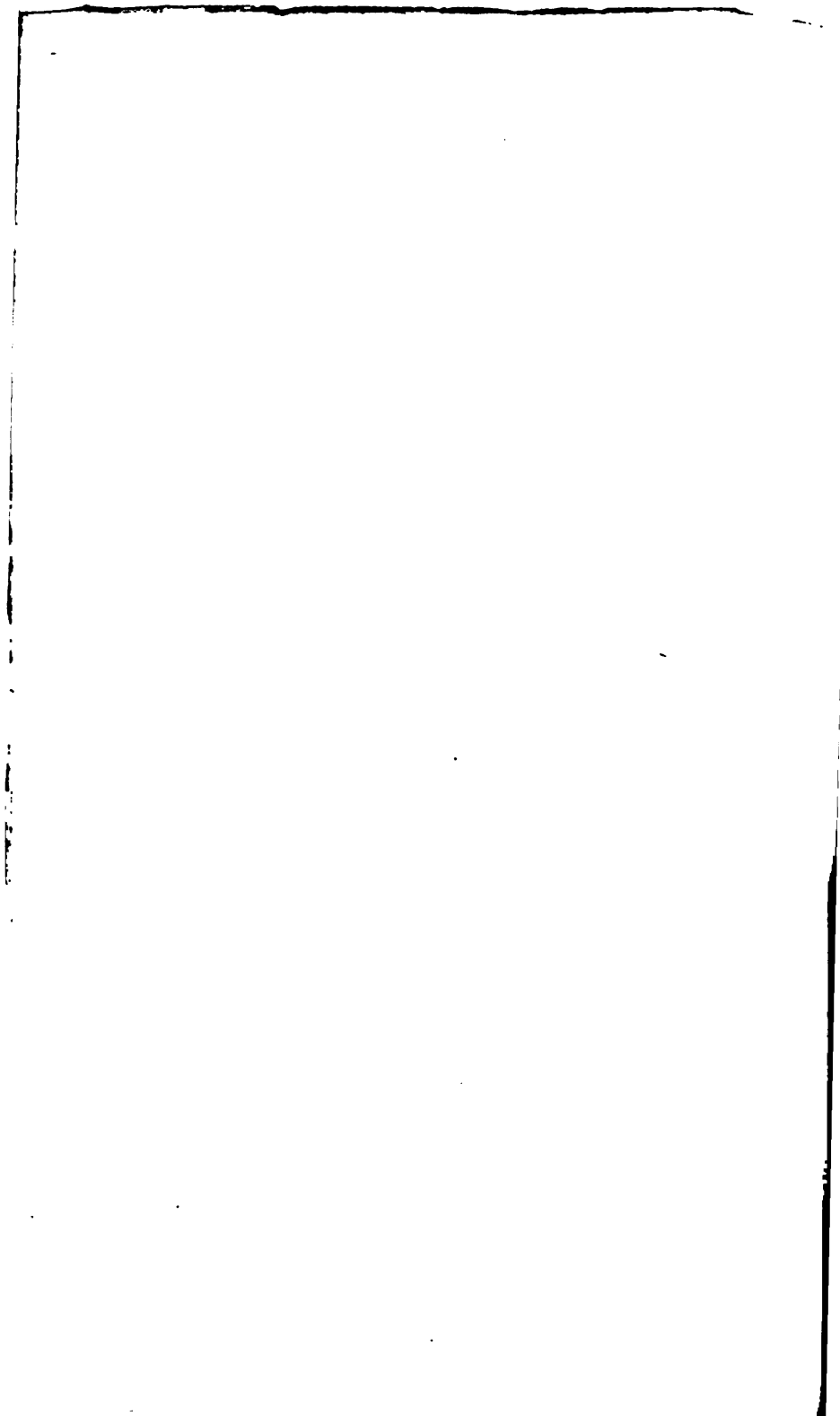


Drawn by M. Ellen Edwards.

DANGEROUS!

[See "The Ordeal for Wives," Chap. XXXV.





into the fire, and stood and watched patiently until the last shred of its frail fabric had consumed away into ashes.

CHAPTER XXXV.

DANGEROUS.

Perhaps there are few more edifying scenes in the drama of social life than that afforded by two thorough women of the world who have been intimate, who have clashed, and who are now living, and purposing to live, on terms of great affection and esteem. How they meet, how they kiss, how they admire each other's dresses! how they stab, how they wound, how they injure in every possible way, and how they smile amidst it all!

Men quarrel grossly—somewhat as inferior animals quarrel: an insult, a blow; a sarcasm, a direct reply; a rivalry, a definite estrangement. In women's feuds there is the essentially human element—the capacity for feigning, for ambuscading, for patient, long-suffering hatred, for the outpouring of sudden deadly venom months, years, after the first wound has, to the eyes of careless beholders, healed.

Women are better lovers of the other sex, and better haters of their own, than men; who, among other masculine qualities, are really capable of genuine friendship and of genuine forgiveness. If you have offended a commonly-honest man, and he is once able to get over the offence and take your hand, I don't think you have more to fear from him than from another; but let a woman injure a woman, in anything pertaining to men, and show me one solitary case in which hearty, absolute forgiveness is the result.

I am cynical, you say; this is a one-sided view of human nature; there are women who take delight in each other's success, who absent themselves at opportune times, that their friend may marry the man they themselves love. Ah, well, I have heard of all these things in fiction, and in pretty little poems also, but I have not found them confirmed by what I have read of women in history, nor by any expe-

rience I have gleaned in contact with my kind. When I meet with such generosity in life I will gladly bear witness—yes, on that moment I will sit down and write and publish some book wherein my new experience shall be frankly, generously recorded. Until then, I must speak of things as I find them.

Novelists, at best, are one of the doubtful benefits of an advanced stage of civilization; but what would novelists be if, from highest to lowest, each one of them did not speak his own small personal experience of men and women to the world. How would a naturalist be forwarding science, who, after a careful, minute investigation of the habits, say, of a Chimpanzee ape, should declare 'these are not what a Chimpanzee's domestic morals ought to be; let me rather ascribe to him the charming instincts and affections of a Kooloo-kamba?' Why, such a man's testimony would be that of a fool. Let him describe the Chimpanzees he has seen; let a novelist describe the men and women he has seen; and let other historians paint the habits of the virtuous Kooloo-kambas, or of the idealized, passionless creatures of the human species across whose path a kindly providence may have cast them.

It was a year or two before the commencement of this story that Mrs. Strangways first came across Paul Chichester, thoroughly by accident, in the box of a mutual friend at the opera. Paul was then much as I have presented him to you; moody, fitful, and wearing an exceedingly threadbare coat; but in one of those eccentric feminine caprices which no sane man would even so much as attempt to solve, Mrs. Strangways fell in love—no, I am loath to use that word—Mrs. Strangways fell into a fancy for him.

She was in the zenith of her power then; a dozen men in the house would have given months of patient hard work to obtain but half of the looks which she accorded to Paul's unconscious face that first night. And she knew that he was indifferent, and liked him the more

for it; and the flatteries of men whose attention, up to that time, had seemed the one thing in London worth coveting, became suddenly stale, flat, and unprofitable in her sight; and when she went home it was to dream, not as usual of the people who had envied her successes, and of the instrument by which the successes had been won, but of one sombre unknown face, of one low voice, which had not spoken above a dozen words into her ear. As much as it was in such a nature to feel a regard in which no small vanity, no idea of personal triumph could enter, Mrs. Strangways did feel it, in those early days, for Paul.

With her resources and her determination, she was not long in bringing him to her house. 'Mr. Chichester will not go to parties,' said the friend in whose box she had seen him: 'the opera is the only place of amusement to which he ever goes, and even there his visits are rare. That you saw him once in my box is a matter of purest accident. We are old friends of his father's family, and about twice a year he comes in, unexpectedly, as he did last night, to dine with us. For the rest, we don't even know where Paul Chichester lives. Notes left for him at such a stationer's in New Bond Street find him.'

Notes left at that stationer's in New Bond Street very soon did find him; invitations to dinner, invitations to morning concerts, invitations to evening parties; every kind of invitation with which a man's temptation can be compassed. He refused them all, systematically; that Mrs. Strangways expected; and then he came to call at the house. I believe he only meant, in his heart, to leave a card; but fate—which certainly does seem to assist unworthy persons as well as good ones—fate willed that at the very moment when he was standing, rather irresolutely, at Mrs. Strangways' door, Mrs. Strangways herself returned from her afternoon ride, and Paul, as a matter of simple courtesy, had to assist her from her horse, and then accompany her into the house.

It was just in the dusk of a winter's afternoon, and instead of ordering lights, Mrs. Strangways stirred up the fire into a ruddy blaze, and seating herself on a low ottoman beside it, began to talk to Paul as if she had known him twenty years at least. Her lithe and rounded figure, her mass of falling golden hair, never showed to greater beauty than when she was *en amazone*. She looked doubly beautiful by the kindly aid of this soft light, and heightened by every charm of a voice and manner that more than a dozen years had trained to perfection in the science of seduction.

When Paul found himself in the cold street, walking home to his hard prosaic life, that night it did come upon him, strongly, that there are things sweeter than duty in this world; that he was acting quixotically in giving up all the rest of humanity for the sake of the one poor blighted life that happened to have a moral claim upon him; that—and here lay the most dangerous temptation of all—it might, at least, lighten his dark, dull existence to look occasionally at the world into which he should never more in reality enter; it would enable him to work better, more heartily, more genially, if sometimes—once or twice in a month—he were to abandon himself to the perilous pleasure of gazing upon the refined and lovely face, of listening to the gentle syren accents of the woman he had left.

In another month he had become intimate with her. Only at certain hours, on certain days, was he free; but every one of these hours (all twilight ones) he gave to Mrs. Strangways, who invariably remained at home and alone when she knew that he was coming. There was no one to interfere with their intimacy. Mr. Strangways was abroad; friends or children never entered the room when Paul was in it. Everything was against him; the circumstances, the time of meeting, his own isolated life, his companion's only too evident preference for his society. And still his head continued sane, his heart whole.

He was not a man to love through, or, consequently, to be won by, the senses alone. That dim-lighted, luxurious little drawing-room, with its voluptuous atmosphere of hot-house flowers, its pictures, its statuettes; Mrs. Strangways, in all the *abandon* of her dangerous loveliness, were wholly insufficient to compass Paul's enslavement by themselves. Had mind, had soul, had genuine passion, even, suddenly arisen, Phoenix-like, from that merely lovely shell of hers in addition to all its undeniable physical charms, I cannot take upon myself to say that his strength of will would have been superhuman. As it was, he never, no, not for one moment, stood upon the threshold of danger.

For a man like him to fall into an entanglement from which principle, from which reason alike held him back, some part of his own better nature must, from the onset, be enlisted against himself. He must honour, even while he dishonours; he must take refuge against that contempt which is the death of love by dwelling on, or imagining, whatever of gold is separable from the clay whereof his idol is made.

But Paul, from the first, knew that there was no gold in Mrs. Strangways. He was too worldly-wise, too shrewd, not to perceive that all her best poses, moral as well as physical, *were* poses that had been gone through a hundred times before. He was too fresh, too genuine of heart, not to detect the false ring, the base alloy of Palais Royal gold, discernible through all her most exalted sentiments and little childish outbursts of self-sacrifice and self-forgetfulness.

As a beautiful picture, as an all-but-finished actress, he admired her; as a charming companion—the zest of novelty yet upon their acquaintance—he sought her; as a woman, however artificial, however erring, he liked her, and would have spoken well of her till he died, for her undisguised preference for himself. More than this she had it not in her to influence him. Just at that particular time, the ice of long habit broken, his imagination warming around subjects so long forbidden,

Paul Chichester's loyalty might easily have been estranged, and by a far plainer woman, one far less skilled in pleasing than Mrs. Strangways. But it was not to be so. Mrs. Strangways continued his sole acquaintance, and for Mrs. Strangways he never felt one spark of genuine love, or even of that other compound of selfish passion and selfish vanity which men and women of the world are accustomed to dignify by the name.

She failed, and, as a matter of course, was sensible of her failure, and yet she did not hate him! He was so devoid of vanity, so thorough, so manly, so delicate in all his intercourse with her, that even Mrs. Strangways' heart could not keep from liking him under the very assurance of her own defeat. She had begun by wishing to enslave him; she ended by being—for at least six weeks—enslaved; yes, and guilty though such a feeling must, of necessity, be, by about the honestest influence of all her poor, false, wasted, frivolous life. At the end of these six weeks it occurred to Paul that he was acting as he had no longer any right to do in coming so often to see her; a look, a word, a tone, something, I scarce know what, on Mrs. Strangways' part, conveyed this knowledge to him, and he at once began to make his visits more rare. She was not quite sure of him as yet; not quite sure that his coldness was not feigned—part of that same game she had herself so often played out and tired of, and by dint of much exertion and many subtle manœuvres she succeeded in inducing him to come to a large ball at her house. If he was using one of the ordinary weapons in such warfare, she would bring forward the acknowledged best system of counter-attack. Mr. Chichester should see the woman towards whom he would profess a waning interest surrounded, courted, admired by a score of other men.

He saw her so; and whatever poor remains of his first feelings for her yet lingered they received their death-blow that night. Drest, excited, flushed with success, Mrs. Strangways actually repulsed him.

His feelings towards a woman he had worshipped would not have been heightened by seeing her an object of passing devotion from a roomful of other men. Personal vanity must be predominant in a man whose love can be rekindled by such small jealousy as this; and of personal vanity Paul Chichester had singularly little. Mrs. Strangways, floating before him in her ball-dress, possessed successively by a dozen and a half of partners in those hot and crowded dances, was a person with whom he had, simply, no concern, no interest whatsoever. He might see her again by her own fireside in the twilight; might, accidentally, fall back into his old liking for her at such a place and at such an hour. At this ball she was less than nothing to him; and, hours before Mrs. Strangways' wearied head was laid upon its pillow, he had stolen away unseen, got back to his home, and forgotten her and her ball and all belonging to her in a cool and dreamless sleep.

She knew from that night upon what footing they were to stand to each other; and still she did not hate him; nay, more, she did not strive or even wish to hate him. In the most lost and humiliated lives we know that one strong, I had almost said one pure, passion will occasionally—God alone knows how—struggle up into being, and exist and have vitality, amid all the corrupt and choking influences of the moral charnel-house in which its unhappy possessor lives. Higher up in the social scale, in a class not reputed guilty, the class to which Mrs. Strangways belonged, it does, likewise, occasionally chance that one almost natural, almost noble sentiment will drag on a precarious existence for a time among the hosts of vain, of false, of unworthy ones with which such hearts are filled.

Of this kind became Mrs. Strangways' regard for Paul. If he chose for weeks together not to come near the house she bore his neglect with patience, and received him, when he did come, with an almost genuine flush of pleasure. She hoarded the brief, cold notes he had once or twice occasion to write her (putting

them away, not with other, later trophies, but in her little old school-girl's desk, where her father's letters still lay); she looked forward, as she could look forward to nothing else, to the rare occasions when he consented to go with her to the Opera. When he was with her there she would have turned away from the stereotyped flatteries of the most sought-after man in London to listen to the very plain, and frequently very scanty words that fell to her from Paul Chichester's lips.

It would be pretty, in the abstract, to believe that this one better influence, this one fact of honestly liking an honest man who ministered to not one out of all the worse qualities of her nature, would have had some kind of exalting influence upon such a character as Mrs. Strangways'. I speak of facts. It had no exalting influence at all. With him, she could well-nigh act herself into momentary simplicity; holding one of his notes, a book that he had lent her, in her hand, she could almost imagine herself such a woman as might have won his regard. At all other times, under the press of all the daily, hourly temptations of her life, Mrs. Strangways was Mrs. Strangways still; nay, more, the very thought of the one man she had failed to win made her more desperate in the pursuit of every other object in which success was certain and forgetfulness possible.

It was at this time that, restless and dissatisfied, she persuaded her husband to let their London house and take one in Bath for a year; and it was there she first made Jane Dashwood's acquaintance. Paul was going up and down to Bath just then (on that unknown quest which afterwards filled Milly's heart with so intense a curiosity), and almost before Mrs. Strangways' and Jane's first vows of eternal affection had had time to cool he was drawn into enacting the part of Miss Dashwood's accepted suitor. And this leads me back to the remark with which I commenced this chapter—namely, the edifying sight afforded by two women of the world who have clashed and are still living on

terms of outward affection and esteem.

All the bitterest feelings of Mrs. Strangways' nature—and, mind, her capabilities for hate were immeasurably superior to those for loving—were called into passionate life by Paul's defalcation, mock though his new allegiance might be. She detested the sight of Jane's face, the sound of her voice, of her very footstep; and still, true to the instinctive rules of strategy which nature seems to implant in such women's brains, she invited the girl more and more to her house, and professed towards her a continually increasing amount of strong personal affection.

Jane neither liked Mrs. Strangways nor disliked her, save in a mild, contemptuous way, in those early days. Few human beings, either in love, or literature, or any other of the great battle-fields of life, dislike a competitor simply because they have outstripped him. It was when her friend had taken up the same weapons in her turn—when, sharpest of all reprisals, Mrs. Strangways had lured Arthur Peel to her side; and with no mock engagement here, but with the tangible fifty thousand pounds of Miss Lynes—that Jane began to feel with what kind of enemy she had to deal. It was in vain for her to say that her lover did not, in truth, admire Mrs. Strangways; had not, in truth, one thought of selling himself in marriage to Miss Lynes; the facts remained unalterable. Arthur Peel's daily visits at the Strangways' house, Arthur Peel's public devotion to the heiress, were things as patent now to the circle that knew them in London as they had been a twelve-month before to the circle that knew them in Bath.

And still she and Mrs. Strangways kissed when they met, and still Mrs. Strangways was untiring in offering her chaperonage to balls, concerts, and operas. She had forgotten Paul? you suggest: had forgiven Jane for being the cause of his first infidelity? Mrs. Strangways was not a woman either to forget or forgive even in small offences, much less in the one event

of her life in which her own heart had made its nearest approach to strong and genuine feeling. Her game was a sure one. She knew every turn of Arthur Peel's weak mind; was already the recipient of his hopes, the mediator, little wanted, between himself and Miss Lynes; his confidante in everything save the secret jealous attentions which, ever since her engagement with Lord Feltham, he had not ceased to offer to poor Jane. And these Mrs. Strangways divined, and, if it had been in her power, would have furthered. Jane Dashwood should have him to the last—to the last! should believe he loved her up to the very moment when his marriage with Miss Lynes was announced. And then—

And then she, Henrietta Strangways, would be avenged! Before judging her, or any other of the women of our time, too hardly, however, we should in justice remember that the days of secret poisonings, of little venomous presents of gloves and flowers, are over; and that moral stabs are really the only ones they can accord to their rivals. Remember, too, that for a temperament like hers the sense of one defeat is more poignant than the recollection of a hundred successes; also, that during all her false and disappointed life the nearest thing to a natural, uncalculating affection that she had ever known had been her regard for Paul!

CHAPTER XXXVI.

LISTENING TO GIUGLINI.

Three or four days after Esther Fleming's arrival Jane Dashwood ran one morning into the nursery, where she was laboriously striving to impress some rudimentary moral truths upon Miss Natty's mind, and informed her that she was to be led into great and exciting dissipation that very night.

'Mrs. Strangways writes and proposes to take you and me with her to the Opera. She has made up quite a large party; and we are all to return to her house to supper afterwards. Good-natured, is it

not? I imagine her reason for inviting us to be twofold—first, that I may have the gratification of witnessing Miss Lynes' attentions to Arthur during the entire evening; secondly, that Paul Chichester may be led into going by knowing he will meet you. However, we'll accept. Giuglini is to sing, which you, I suppose, will care for. And I want you to see Arthur and Miss Lynes, and tell me what you think now of the state of affairs between them.'

'If you meet Arthur I shall tell my papa!' cries out the *enfant terrible*. 'You know you're not to meet him. You're to marry Lord Feltham, as you've promised. And Miss Fleming isn't going to the Opera. Mamma said last night she didn't approve of governesses being brought out of their place.'

Miss Dashwood rewarded this infantine outburst first by pinching Miss Natty's ear till she screamed, then by silencing her with a huge lump of chocolate (always Miss Scott's prime object of adoration), and pushing her out of the room. 'How I pity you, Esther! With all your good qualities, having to train that imp. If I was in your place I should compromise with my conscience at once. Dose her with chocolate till she was sick, and never attempt to coerce her or teach her anything. You are conscientious; and, as a natural consequence, at the end of four days you look as pale and harassed as if you had had five years of such work. It will do you good to go to-night,' she added, kindly. 'I have already settled with Milly that we are to accept.'

When Esther left home she had resolved within herself to accept of no invitation, to partake of no gaieties that might be presented to her. But her heart did cry out too strong for resistance to go and hear this opera—to run this chance of meeting Paul. She longed, she longed passionately to see him! Her new life, with its round of cold and irksome duties, already weighed upon her. It was not possible for her to think more of Mr. Chichester here than she had done at home—wherever she was, was he ever

out of her thoughts? but while she thought of him there had been only a haunting dream; here, amidst strangers, amidst alien and repulsive tasks, it amounted almost to sharp and constant pain. And, besides this, she knew now that Oliver did not love—had never loved her; and that knowledge shook her in her belief of all men—above all, of Paul. If she could meet him, just feel the pressure of his hand, just feel his eyes upon her, once more, she felt that it *must* still something of the restless fever in her heart: not for one second rekindle hope: she regarded Paul, or said to herself that she regarded him, as bound by as strong a tie as marriage, but give her—oh, plausible casuistry!—just one thing in life worth living for—the feeling that he remembered her, that he regarded her still with somewhat of his ancient kindness.

She had learnt of late to school herself sufficiently to keep down the blood that would some weeks before have leapt into her face at the mention of Paul's name; but she at once professed herself to be strangely anxious to hear the 'Trovatore,' and, above all, to hear Giuglini sing in it; and during all the remainder of that day many and biting remarks as to the folly of persons craving after excitement out of their reach were dealt out to her by Mrs. Scott.

Milly was not, I think, more positively bad-hearted than other women, but her littleness of character made her an essentially cruel task-mistress to any person who chanced to be under her power. There are *Aspasias*, there are *Brinvilliers*, by the score, who are generous and faithful mistresses to their own dependents: I never knew a woman of the viceless, virtueless type of Millicent Scott who would not be a tyrant where she could. Natty, for very physical fear, she durst not, her husband she could not, coerce: Esther, as poor, as dependent, as intrinsically superior to herself in all things, seemed to Millicent's moral sense the most fitting subject in the world for household subjection. And then her training under Mrs. Dashwood enabled her to do this kind of work with such unction!

with so strong an intermingling of principle! with so much virulence! with so many tests!

It was not for *her* to dictate; but she did feel it her duty to advise. A woman who, like Mrs. Strangways, neglected all the most sacred duties of life, was not, in her opinion, a fitting chaperon for any unknown, unprotected young woman. Was it—was it possible that Esther could attend to her next day's duties? could take dearest little Natty, as she, Milly, so especially desired, to early service, if the quiet routine of duty were once broken in upon by irregular hours and false excitement?

'Milly, much as I love her, is a thorough compound of papa and of Mrs. Dashwood, too,' said Jane, as they were driving along on their way to Mrs. Strangways' house. 'A perfect specimen of the mingled selfishness and hypocrisy which our education so studiously sought to foster in us. Well for her that she has married a man who, with all his temper, all his obtuseness, doesn't cant! I never liked Marmy so well as when I watched his face while Millicent was improving the occasion by bullying you at dinner. He has, at least, the instincts of his kind, I suppose, and knows, though he could give no reason for knowing, that you will be good to the brat.'

Esther was silent, both then and during the entire drive. She had not felt—she had scarcely heard—one of Mrs. Scott's strictures upon her conduct. She was unconscious of Jane's good-natured efforts to take away the edge of their bitterness. All thought, all feeling, all consciousness, was absorbed in one nervous half-hope, half-sickening dread of seeing Paul; and by the time they were ushered into Mrs. Strangways' drawing-room, this feeling had increased to such an extent that she was forced to take Jane Dashwood's arm—she, ordinarily so calm and self-composed—and cling closely to it for support.

A glance round the room told her that Paul was not there, and her heart beat free again. Mrs. Strangways and Miss Lynes were sitting

alone, their coffee-cups in their hands, and evidently enjoying the interchange of familiar thought before the fire.

'So good of you to come!' cried Mrs. Strangways, as she rose and advanced with both hands cordially outstretched. 'Jane, dear,' and then an interlude of kisses, 'I haven't seen you for an age! Miss Fleming, I am so very glad to renew our acquaintance. You remember Miss Lynes, do you not? No? then let me introduce you again. Miss Fleming, Miss Lynes.'

The heiress half rose from her chair, and slightly unclosed her eyelids at Esther, extending at the same time a cool three fingers to Jane. Six months in London under Mrs. Strangways' care—for they now lived together, Miss Lynes' ample means greatly benefiting the Strangways' *ménage*—had not improved this young person's tone. She was beginning to see what money really is, not only among a limited provincial circle, but in London. She was growing accustomed to see pretty and high-born women neglected, for her sake, by men whose attentions rich and pretty and high-born were alike eager to win; and the effect was precisely what this kind of influence never fails to bring about in a character of innate, mean vulgarity. She gave herself airs; she affected to treat with coolness women into whose society she plumed herself in her heart at being admitted; she played fast and loose with half a dozen suitors, Arthur Peel included, at a time; she displayed her wealth with disgusting ostentation at all times and seasons; she led her intimate friend, Mrs. Strangways, a life which really, in the general summing up of accounts, ought justly to be put against a great many of the sins and shortcomings of that imperfect lady's life.

And she got to dress worse than ever. Have you not remarked that in some persons bad taste is cumulative? strengthening with years, fed and kept up by the assistance of first-class tailors, milliners, and all other appliances which its possessor may have at hand. One great fea-

lived that she would be true to Paul and to her new faith.

And so much misery—a year of never-ceasing suffering—just because Mr. Chichester had chosen to amuse himself by making her a half declaration at parting—a declaration which meant nothing at the time, and which he had probably never taken the trouble to remember since! She had just repeated some such form as this; involuntarily putting it into words, as people do when, by mechanical process, they think to overcome unwelcome emotion, when the door of the box opened quietly, and Paul Chichester took the vacant place close beside her.

Mrs. Strangways looked round, and her face alone would have told Esther who it was that had arrived; but she knew it already. Why do none of the persons who concern themselves about communication with the spiritual world seize hold upon and make much of this wonderful prescience by which human beings in love become cognizant of each other's presence? To have messages from departed friends written in large letters and doubtful grammar upon one's arm, is an experience that only falls to the few. All men or women who have loved can look back upon a time when, without hearing, or seeing, or knowing, they *felt* the presence of the person loved, whether that presence entered into church, ball-room, theatre, synagogue, or any other building.

Is the affinity of the spirit or of the flesh? I don't know in the least; I know that it exists, and Esther Fleming knew it, too; and in the wild thrill of her pulse, the sudden tightening of her breath that it occasioned, quite forgot that it was her duty to look round and bid Paul welcome, and hide, by a cool, unconscious manner, all these ridiculous tumults which it is so utterly indecent for young women living in the world to feel.

So Paul Chichester leant over her, and spoke first. 'You are too absorbed in Giuglini to take any notice of me, Miss Fleming?'

'Giuglini—I have not been listen-

ing to him,' and then she turned and gave Paul all the glowing delight of her honest face. 'Oh, Mr. Chichester, I am so glad to see you again!'

Their hands, their eyes met: and the curtain rose upon precisely the same scene of the great tragedy, love, whereon it had fallen twelve months before.

'You told me then you would never see me again,' said Esther, 'and you were wrong. I knew it at the time.'

'And what has made me wrong?' Paul whispered. 'How is it that you are here, and alone?'

'I have come to live with Millicent, as governess to Mr. Scott's little daughter,' answered Esther, demurely.

'Of course. I have heard that already; but my question is not answered. How is it that you are away from home, and yet alone?'

'Because all, all that I spoke to you about once is over. Don't you remember I told you when I saw you last that it *should* be over? It had no real life in it from the first, Mr. Chichester, and it was a happy thing for both of us when it died outright. The—the other person is going to marry some one far better suited to him than I could ever have been, and I—'

'And you?' said Paul, in an eager whisper that made the blood start, whether she willed it or no, to her face.

'I am free, Mr. Chichester, free and alone, as I intend to remain during the remainder of my life.'

'Oh!' And then there was a long silence. One of those silences which, placed as they were, and with music stirring the pulses, and with the perfect solitude of a crowded assemblage all conspiring to assist, will go further, as you know, towards maturing love into passion than any number of words that the most eloquent human tongue could compress into a similar space of time.

'When do you go out?' said Paul, at length, with no particular relevance, as it seemed, either to the opera or the rupturing of Esther's engagement. 'I mean where, and

at what hour, do you take the young Scott out to walk?

'I take the young Scott in the Square from twelve till one on fine days,' answered Esther. 'That is, if Milly has nothing else for me to do. The child gets her afternoon walk with the nursemaid.'

'And is that all of the open air that you are to have every day?'

'I suppose so, but it is quite enough. I don't care in the least for walking in these dull London streets.'

'What made you come, then?'

'Mr. Chichester!'

'What made you leave your wholesome country home and come to London? You had better have stayed where you were.'

'I don't think so. The Dashwoods told you, I dare say, that Mrs. Tudor left me nothing when she died. My friends in Devonshire are too poor for me to burthen them always. If I would live I must work—and I like work,' she added, with a quick instinct of pride.

'Then why not work in the country? It would have been far better for you.'

She hesitated: she looked down.

'I heard of no one who wanted me in the country. I wrote to the Dashwoods—I mean, I mean—I wished to come to London.'

Paul scrutinized her narrowly. Lit up by the first flush of meeting, he had not noticed how much her face had changed during the last year. He saw it plainly now. Her cheeks were paler; the expression of her mouth was more sad; her eyes looked at you with the look of a woman's eyes, not a child's. What had changed her? What feeling but one ever suddenly initiates a girl of nineteen into the maturity of life and of suffering?

'You were quite wrong in wishing to come to London, Miss Fleming. All children, and indeed young people generally, imagine they have a longing for great cities, and what do they gain when they come? What do they gain, and how much do they lose? However,' he added, and, I must confess, a good deal in answer to the wistful disappointment of her eyes, 'I must

not complain of your resolution, however much I may think that the country would be best for yourself. I hope, now that we live within a few miles of each other again, I shall be allowed sometimes to come and see you as I used in Bath?'

After which remark, as Esther vouchsafed no answer, they steadily gave their attention to the last act of '*Il Trovatore*;' while one of them, at least, began to realize how marvellously like heaven sitting at the back of a crowded opera-box and listening to Giuglini's singing can be!

'Non ti scordar di me,' Paul whispered, as he put on Miss Fleming's cloak for her when the opera was over. And then she felt that she had an actual tangible happiness—something which, whatever the future might bring, was yet *hers* inalienably—to cling to until she should see him again.

One of the most pathetic things about a hopeless or forbidden passion is the foreboding with which it constantly looks onward, and, as it were, forearms itself against the coming dark hour. Don't you remember the sonnet in which the mighty hand that touched every remotest spring of human love and human suffering paints this very phase of which I try to speak in dull and blundering words—

'Against that time, if ever that time come,
When I shall see thee frown on my defects.'

Happy love, tending calmly onwards to its earthly end, knows nothing of this foreboding, this haunting prophetic shadow of the time—when all shall be over! And still the law of compensation is unerring. Happy love, from its first dawn to its fruition, knows no such moments as one of these self-torturing, utterly hopeless, passions *can* yield.

If Esther had been engaged to Paul Chichester do you think that careless whisper of his would have occasioned her such wild rapture, or indeed any rapture at all? Of course not. It would have been common love-making.

And common love-making is not a rapturous employment.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

DIAMONDS WIN.

Mrs. Strangways' supper was a success. The women were all young, or fast, or pretty; most of them all three; the champagne was undeniable; Mr. Strangways had gone to bed. It was a success. Did any of the men and women who assisted at it enjoy themselves?

Three, at least, did not. Mrs. Strangways, who, however well other successes were working, could never quite get over the old pain when Paul was present; Jane Dashwood, who was quite away from Arthur Peel the entire evening; and, lastly, Arthur Peel himself. He took Miss Lynes to supper; he outshone himself in vacutious small-talk during the whole time that the meal lasted; he held undisputed possession of her during that hour especially dear to flirtation, between the time when supper ended and the departure of the guests. And still Arthur Peel's spirit was disquieted within him and his heart sore.

The real, stern part of any duty commences with the first positive sacrifice it demands; not in the making up of one's mind to perform it. Arthur Peel had determined, months ago, to give up Jane Dashwood and to marry Miss Lynes; but, somehow, the enormity of the act had always hitherto been brought before him in a modified and softened light. Miss Lynes had had other attentions on, and that had relieved him from a good deal of heavy work; and Jane, especially since her engagement, had been always ready to smile upon him the moment he quitted the odious side of the heiress; and Mrs. Strangways, too, had employed all her finished art to prevent him feeling overmuch the oppressive weight of Miss Lynes' preference.

But to-night he felt that fate was dead in his favour, and, as I have said, his spirit was disquieted within him. Jane had answered him only by curt monosyllables at the Opera and flirted outrageously the whole of the rest of the night with his greatest friend, little Tregelly of

the Blues. Mrs. Strangways had either looked, or pretended to look, upon his engagement with Miss Lynes as an accomplished fact, and never came near them or gave him assistance in any way. The heiress herself, wrought upon by Giuglini's voice or Mr. Strangways' champagne, or both—*que sais-je?*—the heiress gave him very plainly to understand that she had had quite enough of the present unsatisfactory state of affairs, and that unless he could make up his mind she would make up hers, and give the next man on her list, old Morty Delamaine, the benefit of the doubt to-morrow morning.

Now Arthur Peel meant devoutly that he, not Morty Delamaine, should marry Miss Lynes; and so of course the moment he clearly saw what she meant him to do he did it. Did he wish her to refuse him? Great heaven! how could he? when honour, name, everything that men, even the weakest, the most lost, crave after was to be built up for him by her money! He fervently wished that she would accept him, marry him, at once; but when the words that sealed his fate came (she had just taken a huge mouthful of chicken salad and turned her great white face with a look of disgusting, amative exultation full round on his) his heart, little emotional as he was, seemed to get cold and heavy as stone. This large lump of eating and drinking, and far worse, loving humanity was his: *his*, however he might hate her, however he might neglect her. His! And opposite sat Jane, the only woman for whom he had ever known or could know anything approaching to love, looking handsomer, of course, than he had ever seen her; soft, gentle, yet full of animated life; and engaged to Lord Feltham, and flirting desperately—oh, desperately, because so quietly! with little Tregelly, and evidently not caring one jot whether he was making Miss Lynes a passionate last appeal or merely exploring her not to make herself sick upon chicken salad.

Arthur Peel was not sentimental, neither did he possess any greater

amount of fine feeling than is ordinarily to be met with among young gentlemen living the life that he led; but as much acute suffering, as much mental disturbance as his not largely-endowed nature could sustain was his portion that night. If the heiress had been only four or five degrees less obtuse, or had taken only four or five fewer glasses of champagne, she must have seen how large a portion of the love-making fell to her share; how absent were the replies of her beloved in these first rosy moments of legitimate endearment; how resolutely, fiercely fixed were his eyes, not upon her, but upon Jane Dashwood's face.

But, happily for her own peace, when you consider the kind of life she was about to purchase for herself, Miss Lynes was now, as at all times, stoutly cased in the triple armour of unrefinement and supreme egotism. Arthur Peel had offered to her, and she had agreed to accept him. How awfully delighted he must be, and how unworldly she was to take a man without a farthing because she had a fancy for him! and how good it would be to see Jane Dashwood's face when she should invite her to be her bridesmaid; and what lovely teeth Mr. Peel had when you caught glimpses of them and of his beautiful red lips beneath that sweet, silky moustache! These, I think, were the prominent ideas or emotions that passed through the bride-elect's mind; and by the time supper was ended, and she was pressing Arthur Peel's arm as he escorted her to the drawing-room, her convictions were settled as to his being the most ardent, most demonstrative lover in the world.

Reader, if you are intimate with any woman of Mrs. Strangways' type, don't you know—and knowing, you must appreciate—the peculiar, indescribable atmosphere of her small *sans façon* parties? No uncongenial element enters into them. There are no chaperons, rarely any married men. You have never, by any chance whatever, any music to listen to, or cards to play, or dancing to do. You are never bored. You

always stop late. Men who would go to no other evening party in London would go to Mrs. Strangways', and go a second and a third time. Men hard as flint during the last ten years of their lives, men who would neither marry nor flirt, nor compromise themselves in any other way whatever, had been known to become as wax in the hands of herself and of her staff on these occasions.

To-night the spell was at its culminating point. Whether some hearts were heavy or gay, one out of every duo dispersed about the dim recesses of those two little dangerous drawing-rooms meant something;—and think what an enormous proportion this is in a game wherein both sides are never equally earnest, and where, in the vast majority of cases, neither is one whit so! Little Tregelly told Jane Dashwood, definitely, at twenty minutes past one A.M. that he would hold himself responsible for the consequences if she would break off her engagement—Tregelly, who until this moment had never approached within a hundred miles of love with any unmarried or marriageable woman before! Miss Lynes, as you have seen, had obtained fast and irrevocable hold upon Arthur Peel; and Paul Chichester—well, in spite of principle, of fixed resolve, of mere common sense and common honour, Paul, with every word he uttered, was giving poisonous, cruel sustenance to that dream which the unconcealed happiness of poor Esther's face but too plainly betrayed to him.

'You, at least, have enjoyed yourself,' whispered Jane Dashwood, as they prepared to depart; and, as she spoke, she laid her little stone-cold hand upon her friend's. 'As I sat listening to all the nonsense that empty fool chose to talk to me I looked at your face and envied you—envied you the power of believing as you believe Paul's fine false words now! Esther, stand by me,' she added, quickly, and with a ghastly attempt at a smile. 'Here comes Mrs. Strangways; and I know the expression of her face. My hour is come. Arthur is gone!'

When was a woman's instinct ever wrong in such a matter? Mrs. Strangways swept up to their side with her noiseless step, drew Jane's cloak closer, with her own hand, across the miserable, passionately-throbbing breast, hoped they had enjoyed themselves, hoped they would soon accompany her to the Opera again, and then stooped and whispered a word in Miss Dashwood's ear.

'You look surprised,' she remarked, as, notwithstanding her own forewarning, notwithstanding training, notwithstanding pride, the colour ebbed back out of Jane's face in this bitterest moment of defeat; 'and yet everybody must have seen what was coming. I have looked upon it as settled for so long that when Augusta whispered the news to me just now I had really no fresh congratulations to offer. Miss Fleming,' and she turned to Esther, 'I don't know why we should make this any secret from you. Mr. Peel is to marry Augusta Lynes.'

'Esther isn't likely to take any interest in other people's love-affairs to-night,' cried Jane; and steady though her voice was you could detect quite a hard, unnatural ring in it. 'Really the way in which my old friends are forsaking me is fearful. Even though one is engaged it is not a pleasant feeling, is it, Mrs. Strangways, to see the old worshippers kneeling at new shrines? I never thought Paul's manner could be full of tenderness and *petits soins* as it has been to-night; but then Miss Fleming is the first woman—except myself—whom I have ever seen Paul Chichester in the least admire. Thank you for your chaperonage and pleasant party, dear; and good-night.'

And then they kissed.

'But for the last time—the last time!' cried Jane, in her paroxysm of childish misery, as they were driving home. 'I kept up the farce to the last because I would give her no additional pleasure in her hour of hateful triumph; but wait till I have had my last interview with Arthur—wait till I have met Arthur Peel once more, and you will see what terms I mean to stand upon with them all.'

'And I'll write to Lord Feltham!'—this burst out a moment or two later—'I'll tell him to come home, and I'll marry him—yes, before they are married; and I'll set about getting my *trousseau* ready to-morrow afternoon, after I have seen Arthur. I'm not going to break my heart: don't pity me, Esther—don't pity me! I shall marry Lord Feltham, and be among a set of people to whom all Miss Lynes' money will never admit Mr. Peel; and it will be best so. Esther, he hates her. I should go mad if I didn't know *that*. He hates, he loathes her, and takes her so, contemptible wretch as he is! loathing and all, for the sake of her money. Great heaven! what men are, that one should go so nigh to breaking one's heart for any of their falsehoods!'

When they got home Jane's mood had cooled, and she said all she wanted was to be alone and to sleep. But right through that night, yes, till the next cold winter's day had dawned, Esther heard the sound of Miss Dashwood's restless footsteps pacing up and down the room above her head.

And as she listened it was borne in upon her with remarkable distinctness to feel if one so fickle could suffer thus, what she, with all her larger capabilities for misery, would have to go through when her hour of awakening should likewise come!



AN INCIDENT IN THE 'HOUSE.'

'SMITH, did you ever go over a mad-house?'

'No, Brown. Have you ever seen one?'

(I may not say that Smith and Brown are cryptonyms, for Brown says he should never hear the last of it if it were known in his club that he had been 'made' so completely. But I anticipate.)

'I never have, my boy; but a man I know knows a great mad-doctor who keeps a swell private asylum on the north side of London somewhere; not a place with bars and chains, you know, but a kind of villa, where they dress for dinner—the sanest of them at least—and where they go in for the "persuasion-is-better-than-force" theory. He says—my friend, I mean, Prig (another *nom de guerre*), of the Treasury: you've met him—if I like to come with him, and bring a friend, he'll drive me down in his brougham this afternoon, and we can see over the whole thing. What do you say?'

'What time is it now? One? I was to have breakfasted with young Ace-Cater in Jermyn Street at half-past, but his man has just been to say that he went off suddenly last night to Baden-Baden on urgent private affairs. I'll go. Have some luncheon, and we'll be off to Prig.'

At two o'clock we were waiting in Prig's room: at five minutes past he sprang up the stairs, looking—for one who exhibited, under ordinary circumstances, all the repose that stamps the cast of Vere de Vere—somewhat flurried.

'Brown—excuse me—I was mentioning Stray Westcot and his asylum to Lord — (name omitted for reasons previously inserted), and he said as the mail wouldn't be in from Queenstown till six, he should like to go with us. Mr. Smith, will you accompany him in my brougham? Brown and I will show the way in a Hansom.'

Ten minutes more, and we were on our way. I felt at first doubtful what to say to the statesman, but as he seemed to prefer any topics to

those of national importance, and said he knew nothing of the news, for he had not had time to read the 'Times' that morning, we conversed on lunatics and their treatment. After an hour's drive we alighted at the asylum, or rather 'Lyon House.' The place looked much like the ordinary residence of a gentleman, and perhaps if we had not observed a benevolent-looking, elderly man sitting on a garden-chair in the grounds, with his feet and legs buried up to the knees in the soil, carefully watering himself with the appropriate pot, and complaining that he had only grown an inch and a half since yesterday, we should have doubted whether we could have come to the right place. Brown introduced us to Dr. Westcot, and that man of science seemed much honoured by the advent of his distinguished visitor—or visitors, I may say. He showed us over the whole of the establishment, explaining how the patients were allowed to do anything, within the bounds of possibility, they might wish. Opposition, he said, he was sure would only retard, or destroy all hope of their cure. As long as they only fancied themselves kings or cats, his plan was easily carried out; but some had so little method in their madness that it became extremely difficult to humour their caprices. A man who had been a distinguished ornithologist in the days of his coherence, believed himself an ostrich, and refused all sustenance but flints and tenpenny nails. This was thought too unwholesome, and for a time it was feared the sufferer would starve. At last his failing faculties were satisfactorily deceived by cold sausages and sticks of chocolate. Another believed himself Greenacre, and raved for a knife to cut up a body, or, he said, his crime would be discovered. A bungler would have prescribed solitude and irons. Westcot had a dummy made, of which the limbs buttoned on and off. The pseudo-Greenacre confessed that unbuttoning a limb was

easier than cutting it, and was already convalescent. The doctor mentioned a case which had recently occurred to him, in which the relatives of a young man wished to confine him because he made ducks and drakes of a fine property, and lived a reckless life. Westcot told them that he could not let such a patient have his own way, and he was determined not to use coercion. No one *could* be fast or extravagant (pecuniarily) in Lyon House. The young man must be restrained; but restraint was for the sane.

Having carefully inspected the whole building, we were invited by Strayt Westcot to taste some fine 'Pic du Table' which he had already had in his cellar some days.

'If you will wait here a moment, my lords, I will give the necessary orders, and show you my own sanctum. Excuse me one minute.'

His steps still echoed on the stairs, when a keeper approached, and said, with a bow, 'Is any one attending to you, gentlemen? Have you seen the whole establishment? Have you seen the "House?"'

'The "House!"' we cried. 'No. What is it?'

'Oh, I thought Dr. Westcot would have shown you. I'll take you there myself, gentlemen. Some of our patients, you see, gentlemen, fancy they are Members of Parliament. Dr. Strayt Westcot humours their fancy, and they have a room set apart for them to debate in. Most visitors like to see this, gentlemen. Will you follow me?'

'This is very curious,' said Lord —. 'It shows the deep hold the institutions of the country have even on maniacs. I shall observe their forms with great interest: they may perhaps suggest some improvements that I may introduce in another pl---.'

'Beg your pardon, gentlemen,' said the keeper, 'but I must tell you the rules to be observed in the "House." They made them themselves. I will show you into the room. You will see a form near the door. Sit down on that immediately. Don't take any notice of the speakers; but if any one says anything to you, all of you get up,

and bow three times. If you mind and do this, they will leave you alone. Do you understand?'

'Perfectly.'

'Quite so.'

'Thank you.'

'How very singular!' added Prig: 'they have a recognized strangers' gallery too!'

'We don't get bowed to,' said Lord —.

'Hush!' exclaimed the keeper, and opened a door.

We entered a moderate-sized room, with a table covered with green baize in the middle. Four men were sitting round the table, and a fifth was in the very act of speaking. We sat down on the indicated bench, and the keeper softly closed the door. A significant glance flashed along the faces of the 'honourable members' as we came in, and I, for one, felt rather apprehensive of violence. The orator was declaiming with some vehemence. He was a short, fat man, and was hot with exertion. He was just raising his arm to give the table a convincing knock, but he paused as we sat down. The members looked at one another, then the gentleman in possession of the House said:

'We understand that you wish—that you are desirous——'

We all rose from the form. Lord — made one of those bows (half ironical, half courteous) with which he sometimes illustrates a paragraph, and we all followed his example. We repeated our salaam three times. The members looked rather wildly at us, I thought, and one of them gave vent to a strange, snort-like sound, something between a laugh and a neigh. A tall, thin man sitting opposite to the first speaker then stood up, and said, in a bitter and caustic tone:

'It is as I said. You see that you are wrong. Gentlemen, I appeal to you. I contend that for the four unhappy beings before you, no less awful fate is fit than that they——'

Here, I confess, I became seriously alarmed. The fat man showed signs of becoming unmanageable, and the thin man pointed derisively at myself and my companions. Even Lord — looked furtively at the door. We saw that the attention of

the House was directed to us, and it seemed to strike us simultaneously that we must bow again. We did so. The effect was fatal. Fire gleamed in the thin man's eye. He pointed still at us, and cried:

'Look! look, sir, at them! wretched mimicries of humanity! they must be detained—they must be—'

This was too much. The fat man was redder in the face than ever. There was no knowing what these infuriated maniacs might do in their frenzy. Lord — bounded to the door, and we rushed from the room. There were no degrees of precipitancy from *abito* to *erupit*: it was *erupimus* in the case of all of us. Lord — fled down the corridor with considerable 'headway' on, and at the top of the stairs encountered the doctor. The collision might have been serious, but Westcot saved himself by the balustrade.

'My lords,' he cried, 'where have you been? I could find you nowhere.'

'Been? In peril of our lives. We've been in the "House," and the members became infuriated.'

'The House?'

'Yes; you know: the House.'

'I beg your pardon: I don't quite.'

'Where they debate, you know: there, that room at the end of the passage. One of your keepers took us. Don't you understand?'

Westcot looked from one to another helplessly. He was evidently in the dark. We were bewildered too. At last, after staring blankly at us for some seconds, he burst into a roar of laughter.

'I see it all,' he stammered, as he gasped for breath in the intervals of his laughter. 'You've been—ha! ha!—that villain Querkett—ho! ho!—excuse me—'

The worthy physician was so cackinnatorily incoherent, and took so long to make us fully comprehend him, that I will explain matters in my own words. It appeared that two of the patients had for some time been rapidly recovering. They were anxious to leave Lyon House, and return to the custody of

their own friends. Westcot did not like to dismiss them without taking every possible precaution, and determined, with their full consent, that they should have an interview with three independent physicians. If these judges deemed it prudent for them to depart, they might go whithersoever they listed: if the contrary, they were advised to stay. At the appointed time the three doctors assembled. It chanced that on that day the vicar of the parish and one of his curates were present at the mad-house, for they occasionally held religious services within its precincts, and were sometimes required to make affidavit to the identity of inmates. These five gentlemen were collected in the waiting-room of the establishment. Dr. Westcot had already explained some of the symptoms to his colleagues. One of these, Dr. Pursy, maintained that the patients in question would indubitably turn out sane. Dr. Thynne Aslath was clear that if what was said of them was true, they must be mad. Dr. Pursy grew warm in the debate. The patients were expected every minute. We entered the room. All supposed us to be the two petitioners, and two of the upper keepers. Dr. Pursy was confounded in his opinion of our sanity by our maniacal act of bowing. Dr. Aslath was triumphant, and would have advised handcuffs and the stocks, without benefit of clergy, who supported the merciful view of the case. Then we fled. The keeper who introduced us was himself a patient, in general perfectly harmless, and sane enough to enjoy a practical joke, as madmen often are.

As soon as we heard the truth we hurried from the place. No man likes to be made a fool of. Here was Lord —, holding in his hands the balance of peace and war, sat upon by a committee of suburban doctors. It was an awful 'do.' Prig will never recover, I believe, for Lord — will always lay it all at his door.

If you tell the story, don't mention the names. I forget though: you can't, for I haven't myself; so it's all right.

ROBSON.

I AM looking over an old sketch-book of mine : not one of your ambitious sketching tablets, your solid slabs, upon which I occasionally aspire, with melancholy result, to pourtray the tints of the forest and the mountain ; nor yet one of your large-leaved drawing-books, in which I adventure upon the caricature or graver cartoon ; but a little book, some seven inches by four, originally designed, I apprehend, for the keeping of accounts, but by me used for setting down figures of a totally different sort. It is an old pocket sketch-book, solely devoted to drawing in the theatres, and I now turn over its pages with melancholy interest. O register hieroglyphic of happy hours gone by, how many friends whom I have never known, how many objects who have never dreamed of my passionate attachment, do thy pages set before me ! Here I see the inimitable Box, and no less inimitable Cox. Here I see Herbert of the sunny hair and graceful form, whom I loved as one loves his favourite cousin ; and here the time-defying Stirling, for whom I entertained an affection half filial and half fraternal. Here is Charles, the second of his name, the merry monarch of high comedy. He was the first of the great actors that I saw : from him I first learned that nature and great art are twin sisters. And now, as I turn the page, I seem to catch a faint odour of dead rose-leaves, a stronger one of orange-peel ; visions of love in a cottage and passion in a pit rise before me : visions of maids and magpies, Kenilworth Castle and Court Favour. Oh ! Marie, Marie—ah, well ! I never told my love. And what have we here ? A little crouching figure, peering cunningly into the face of a man in the costume of an abbé. Who can this be ? This is he again—the same figure, but in different guise. A Jew now, an eager, grasping Israelite truly, but so comic withal—so irresistibly comic. He holds a knife and a pair of scales. Can this be Shylock ? If so, bare thy breast, Antonio, without fear. If he slay thee at all, it will be with laughter. Again, but this time a deformed dwarf, he sits aloft in an orange-tree, and holds sarcastic colloquy with an apparently terrified queen. And here an old white-haired man, pinched and sour-tempered, he crouches in an agony of desperation against the wall at the head of a staircase. A taller man in a riding-dress

looks at him in astonishment. Another page, and I see him again, this time in the dress of an ostler, leaning, in most impudent fashion, against a table, at which two gentlemen are lunching. He pays not the least attention to one of them who is addressing him, but regards a glass of beer, which he holds in his hand, with the glance of a connoisseur. And can this be he ?—this woman in the ample robe, who, with one child in her arms and another holding to her garment, is descending that mountain-path ? Once more, and I see a little old porter, in knee-breeches and a short blouse, wheeling a heavily-laden barrow. He is evidently very poor : he does not look as if he had enough to eat ; he is not strong enough to wheel that heavy load ; his face looks as if he had suffered, were still suffering, from some great trouble ; yet he manfully struggles on with his labour, and tries to whistle. I shut the book—I will look no more—Robson is dead.

Yes, a great actor has departed from among us, and but little notice has been taken of our loss. Half a dozen lines in this newspaper, and a short article in that ; an announcement that there will be no performance at his theatre on the day of his funeral ; and so the grave closes over Robson. This comparative carelessness about the death of a man to whom London is indebted for many delightful hours is due partly to the fact, that for more than a year previous to his death Robson had not appeared on the London boards, and partly that, for a year or so before he retired, he certainly was not the actor he had been.

Of all professions, the actor's is most dependent upon constantly retaining public attention. In all professions, the man who does

* Give way.

Or hedge aside from the direct forthright.*

must expect to fall behind in the general estimation ; but, as regards an actor, in whose case bodily presence is everything, this is especially true. He gets his living by being looked at for two or three hours every night. If he is better worth being looked at than his brother actors, he gains a reputation. This reputation must be kept up in the same way that it was won. If he dies or retires from the stage, what remains of him for people to admire or honour ? When a great poet dies, he leaves his

writings, to save him from oblivion. They are immortal, and by consequence he is immortal too. When a great artist dies, his name lives on in the pictures that he has given to the world; but it is different with an actor. Directly death has closed the lips upon which hundreds hung with delight, and stiffened the limbs whose every movement was so eagerly followed, what is left of the actor? In the green-room and amongst theatrical people, a temporary reputation; in the world outside the theatre, nothing. He leaves nothing for posterity to remember him by. Men may write for posterity, and paint for posterity, and make music for posterity, but no man can act for posterity. None but his contemporaries have part or lot in him. In those rare instances where actors have escaped this hobbyhorse* fate, it has been solely owing to their connection with great men whose memory the world honours for substantial reasons; but, as a rule, when the actor dies, his name is put out. How many men in ten thousand know anything about Knight, or Munden, or Liston? Who were they? Why, they were great actors of scarcely a generation ago. Lamb speaks of Munden with very high praise: who speaks of him now? In two generations will any one know more of Robson? Surely not. If the great actors of forty years since are forgotten in so short a time, what chance is there for the actors of the present day? Fifty years ago an audience at a theatre was something that an actor could respect. It was a bench of judges. What was good it heartily commended, and what was bad it as heartily and promptly condemned. There were real critics in the pit in those days. When the elder Kean, in the part of Shylock, abandoned the received way of delivering the line—

On what compulsion must I? Tell me that,

and gave it,

On what compulsion must I? Tell me that—

the improvement was instantly perceived and applauded by the house. But would such a change as that be appreciated by an audience in these days? I trow not. Now, when the worst piece is certain of favour, when a performer who cannot sing and dance is a drug in the Theatrical market,

* ‘Or else shall he suffer, not thinking on with the hobbyhorse, whose epitaph is, For oh, for oh, the hobbyhorse is forgot.’

what real interest or affection can an actor, however good, hope to excite in his audience? If actors have degenerated, which however, I very much question, it is because audiences have set them the example. When I call to mind what pleases a London pit at present, I wonder no longer that Robson dies and not a soul seemingly cares that the stage has lost its most original and most powerful performer. What does it matter to the present Theatrical Public? Mr. Beverley's pictures and Miss Chloe's legs are left us still. Who cares? Up with the curtain. Silence for the song by the Bedlam gentleman! Attention to the dance arranged expressly for this theatre by an ingenious inmate of Hanwell Asylum.

Robson, say the writers of his brief memoirs, was the best of our burlesque actors. Undoubtedly he was. But to dismiss the subject of his acting with such a remark as that is unjust. A burlesque actor, at present means a man who dances and sings as they do at the music halls—those saloons of pleasure, where vice and folly listen nightly to what would be merely nonsense if it were not profane and indecent, in the same way that carrion would be merely dead flesh if it were not alive with maggots; alas! for the public taste when such places draw—and who in his dialogue lays due emphasis upon every pun. From such praise, then, we must conclude that Robson sang and danced better, and made more of his puns than his fellows. But was this all? Can any one who remembers the Medea think of it as a mere singing and dancing piece of absurdity? Can any one who remembers that strange figure, half queen, half pauper, one minute telling her woes in the querulous tone of the regular street-beggar, the next turning like lightning upon the bystanders and terrifying them with her passionate voice and gestures; now with frightful effort suppressing her rage while Jason confesses his engagement to another, and now losing all control and overwhelming him with reproaches; here standing before us a woman abandoned by the world, utterly hopeless, and here gathering strength from very desperation and planning her revenge with still-increasing passion, till she breaks into that wild frenzied dance that gives grotesqueness to the whole—can any one remember this just not tragedy, or tragedy gone mad, and compare it with the burlesque of any other actor? The truth is Robson's burlesque was unlike anything else of

the kind. The *Medea* was a piece of acting that you could compare with nothing unless you went to Robson again for a comparison. The difference between his burlesque and that of other actors seems to me to be this. They burlesqued—even if they rise so high as that—only the trick and manner of tragic or melodramatic actors: he burlesqued the *Passions* themselves. This I think will apply to everything that he did. Look at his farce-acting. Even in that he always seemed to try to set his foot upon the natural rock before he made a step forward, to get hold of some characteristic of humanity to give a backbone of truth to the part. There was always something in his acting that betrayed a closer observation of human nature than you saw in the acting of other players. Who could act a nervous man as he did? Who that ever saw him could forget the quick nervous step; the peculiar twitching of the mouth; the strange uncomfortable movements of the hands, as if in some uncertain way they were trying to convey the notion that he was perfectly at his ease—oh! perfectly at his ease; the uneasy look of the eyes and the feeble smile that gave the lie to such a notion at once; and that sudden closing of eyes and mouth, and the quick clutch at the table, as if nature could stand it no longer and he were only holding on till something snapped? All this, true as it was to nature, was never so true as to be painful. A very nervous man is a painful sight; but the art of the actor here came into play, and depriving the representation of all that was unpleasant, but of nothing that affected its truth, made it at the same time admirably natural and exquisitely droll.

Could any one give you a jealous man as he could? Remember him when, so considerably to oblige Benson, he affected to be jealous. Recollect with what a display of passion he kicked that footstool, and with what a serious earnestness he prevented its rolling dangerously far. Remember with what a reckless hand he seized those candlesticks, and with what a quiet and careful one—so as not to spill the grease—he set them down again. And remember how fatally his mangel wurzels interfered with the green-eyed monster! But when the real jealousy seized him, how he lost at once all thought for his mangel wurzels and all respect for Benson's upholstery! how he raged about the room, and dashed the furniture here and there!—but yet, while his real jealousy was so unlike his assumed pas-

sion, recollect how, by some means or other, the real constantly reminded you of the assumed, and though amazingly funny in itself, was still more laughable because it brought out more strongly the absurdity of what had preceded it.

In the rapid changes from something intensely serious to something as intensely comic, Robson was without a rival. In such pieces as 'Daddy Hardacre,' and the 'Porter's Knot,' he would work upon you with his pathos till your eyes were filled with tears, and then, by a sudden touch of the ridiculous, would send them rolling down your cheeks for a cause the very reverse of that for which they were summoned. Or when the house was in full laugh, he would arrest the mirth when at its height by a word, sometimes by a look; and you would see a theatre full of faces darken into immediate gravity as the bright face of a lake darkens under a flying cloud. The sublime and the ridiculous are said to be very nearly allied; but with him they lay in such close propinquity that in his course he could spring from one to the other as he pleased. Like the conjuror who can, from his magic bottle, pour any liquor he chooses, Robson could from the same source draw either tears or laughter. And yet this did not destroy the truth of his representation. A serious character was still serious, although it excited your mirth; you laughed at Hardacre, but did not feel the less that he was a wretched despicable miser. You laughed at Sampson Burr; but, for all that, you did not love the brave old man the less, or cease to sympathize with his sorrow. Surely this was an evidence of wonderful power in the actor.

Robson was by no means without faults. He was much too fond of gagging, as the theatrical phrase is, of introducing impromptu bits into his dialogue. This is always a fault, for however happy the gag—and his were sometimes very happy—it almost certainly reveals the actor and destroys the illusion. In a farce this is perhaps of no great importance, but in a more serious piece it offends good taste painfully. Another defect of his was, that he occasionally overworked his pathos. He had too much a habit of taking himself by the throat and giving us to understand by a superabundance of muscular action that he was suffering from great mental distress, against which, however, he hoped to be able to bear up if we would give him time. But it was only in the last year or two

of his career that these blemishes became apparent, when continued ill-health had greatly affected his powers. Moreover, this is scarcely the season to point very critically to his faults. Let us think of him as he was when his grotesque passion in Medea first asto-

nished the town; when, as the miserly Hardacre, he was nearly distracted between his ducats and his daughter; and when, in the 'Porter's Knot,' he showed us that a little old man, most unheroic to look at, could be a true hero.

THE ASHES OF LOVE.

'Sigh no more, ladies, sigh no more;
Men were deceivers ever;
One foot in sea, and one on shore,
To one thing constant never.'

SHAKESPEARE—*Much Ado about Nothing.*

WHEN rivers reclimb the mountain side;
When Time puts back for a thousand years;
When the moon and the sea refuse the tide—
Shall Love grow sleek on a diet of tears.

When the butterfly mourns o'er the shed cocoon;
When the corpse is a care to the soul above;
When the world learns to pray for night at noon—
Shall Love be stayed with the husks of love.

Bred up together from childhood's time,
Fair was the girl and fearless the boy;
And each loved other as buds the Prime,
And Love rained kisses, and was not coy.

How happy their dream they scarce could know;
Scarce could they tell why a sigh was bliss;
Till years, bringing sternness sweet to her brow,
Gave a glance for words, and a blush for a kiss.

And their parents smiled as they saw the signs;
And the course of their love ran smooth and bright;
And its stream flowed soft as a breeze in the pines,
Till it babbled its vows in the pale moonlight.

Now hath he left her to win him a name;
More hath he left her to win her a home;
And his letters tell of his constant flame,
And her heart keeps tune with, 'Ah, would he come!'

His love-words anon seem like echoes of love;
Of love that was first to a rival spoke:
Ah! who is faithful, if false he prove;
Or true, if his plighted troth be broke?

'Tis the first night of Winter, and Nature dies;
Dies with her hope, as she sits and grieves;
Tears flee the settled despair of her eyes,
While the blast pelts her window with withered leaves.

Hark!—nay, we shall listen for sobs in vain.
She burns her past treasures one by one;
And, mindful of joys that shall ne'er be again,
This torrent breaks forth from her heart of stone:

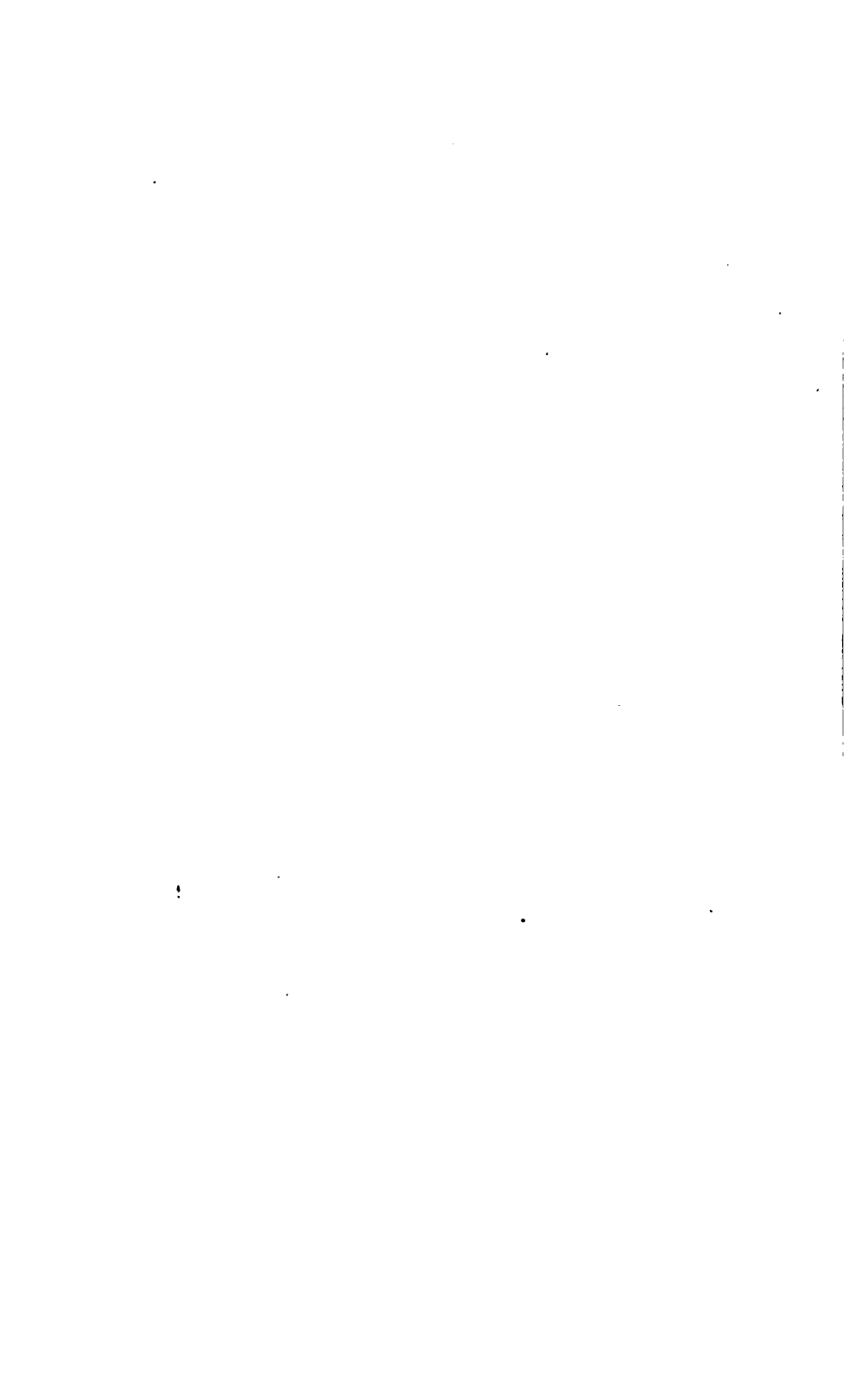
'If to the darksome halls of the dead,
On the eve of our nuptials sworn, he had gone,
There should my heart have pillowed my head;
A bridegroom lost were an angel won.

- 'Were it death only, one life had died—
 All but my all; but now doth he live
 To murder the honour of all beside,
 Since *his* truth and faith no more survive.
- 'Stands he revealed as a bloodless lie;
 He left me, and going, he backwards threw—
 Swearing, "All faithless, all false as I—"
 A veil over faces brave and true.
- 'Ah, Parthian! making his cursed retreat
 With slander-shafts from a recreant bow!
 Not yet can my heart the "no" repeat;
 Though well I wis that it be not so.
- 'And his leprous hand my vision anoints
 With a wizard's oil; then points mine eye;
 And yet I see only just as he points,
 Though I know him a cheat, and his art a lie.
- 'He hath left me; and isles shall join their hands
 To fish up forgotten continents;
 Tritons shall blow their shells o'er the lands;
 And the sea-gods shall quit their settlements;
- 'The old-world comets shall reappear;
 The south with the north its clime shall change;
 Systems be blithe for their cyclic year;
 But we, through the ages, for ever, be strange!

A. H. G.

THE CROQUET ALPHABET.

A was the Arena prepared for the fight,
B the eight Balls that were painted so bright;
C was the Croquet we all met to play,
D the Division of sides for the day;
E was the Enemy, showing great skill,
F the four Friends, that were cleverer still;
G was the Grumbler, who always stuck fast,
H was the Hoop that he could not get past;
I the Ill-will that he showed to his foes,
J was the Jump when he hit his own toes;
K was the Kick that he gave with the pain,
L was the Luck that he sought for in vain;
M was the Martyr sent off from the post,
N was the Nuisance that bullied him most;
O was the Onslaught the enemy made,
P was the Pluck that the others displayed;
Q was the Query, 'Oh! what *shall* I do?'
R the Reply, 'Stay, I'm coming to you';
S was the Science we all meant to try,
T the Temptation to spoon on the sly;
U was the Umpire, who settled disputes,
V the poor Vanquished, as solemn as mutes;
W the Winners, who flourished their bats;
X the Xcitement and waving of hats;
Y the loud Yells, both of joy and of sorrow,
And Z was the Zest for a game on the morrow.



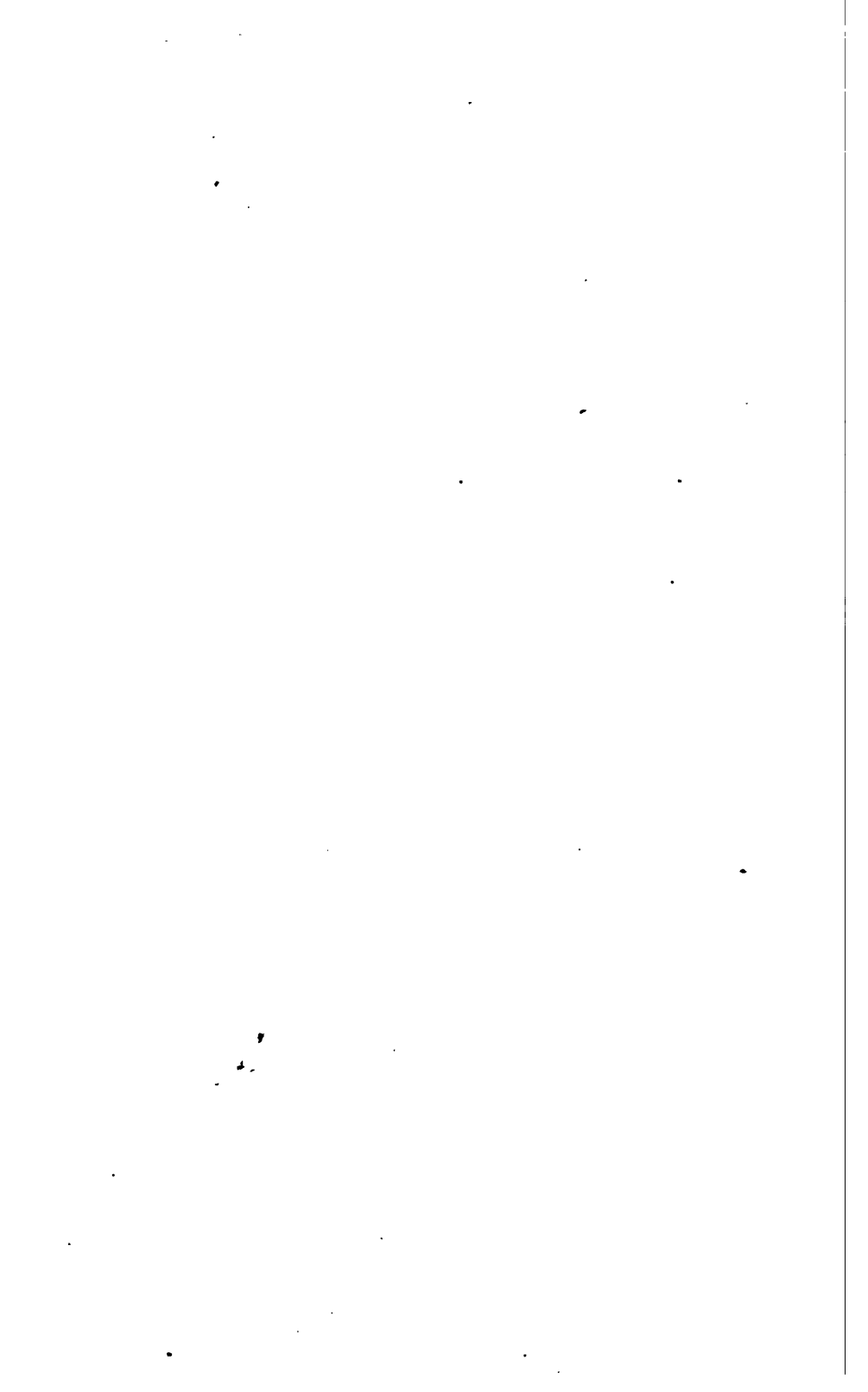


From the Painting by F. Heilbuth.]

THE ASHES OF LOVE.

"She burns her past treasures one by one."

[See the Poem.]



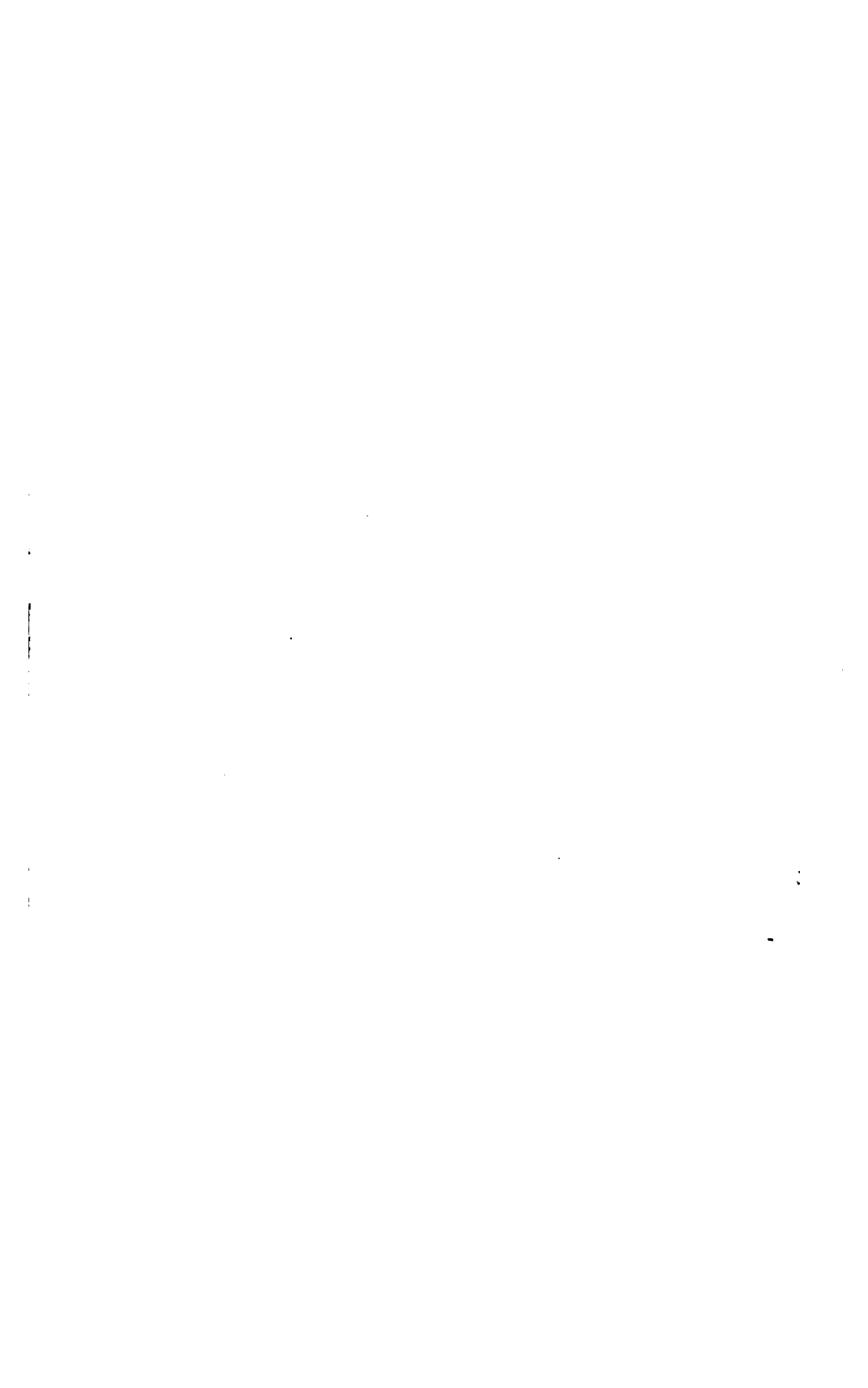




Drawn by M. Ellen Edwards.

A HOLOCAUST.

[See "The Ordeal for Wives."



LONDON SOCIETY.

NOVEMBER, 1864.

MISS PINK'S FIRST SEASON.



'IT IS THE YOUNGEST OF YOUNGER SONS.'

[See p. 393.]

IT must be evident to the meanest capacity that this is Miss Pink! And that she is looking at her 'back hair.' (See plate apart.)

Fact is, she is not quite sure that this new coiffure is becoming. It is delightfully big and high, you know, and has seven frizettes of sorts and sizes disposed in its various rolls and bows, and it is utterly unlike anything in nature, so it must be correct—but query becoming?

Miss Pink always remains a few minutes in her room after Louise

has gone to fasten Madame's gown. She says she must get her fan and put on her gloves, but, in reality, she takes a good look at her sweet self in the long glass.

'One must be tidy, you see,' and Louise is not always quite particular enough with the pins. 'Above all things be tidy,' was one of Fitz's special advices. Not that one cares what Fitz says—now, after his extraordinary, not to say abominable behaviour since one came to town; having been such a darling in the

country, saying all sorts of nice things about meeting one again in London, and dancing with one, and so on, and then! not even giving himself the trouble to come to five o'clock tea. And that day in Rotten Row! when one had put on one's white and mauve bonnet specially for his benefit, and kept a vacant chair under one's crinoline; and Mr. Fitz walked past in the shiniest of little boots, and took off his hat with a bland smile—never even coming near one. 'He ought to have—to have his toes trodden on,' says Miss Pink in hot anger—to her own reflection. Not that Miss Pink cares—oh, no,—she has plenty, plenty of other people to talk to, and plenty of people to dance with, for the matter of that—only he needn't have chosen to ask one for the waltz one had just given to the long plunger, with the eyeglass, and then go away altogether, and not ask one again. Oh, goodness! Mamma is calling. Down go the gloves; and the fan, rustle, rustle—gown catches on a nail. Miss Pink would swear, if she knew how; catches her dress all up in a bundle and rushes down stairs. There is a plunge, a struggle, John, the stoic, breathes hard with the responsibility of piloting the flounces past the wheels, and of causing the unwilling door to close on the crinolines.

'Dear mamma—so sorry to have kept you waiting.'

'What were you doing?' says mamma, rather cross; 'you dawdled so dreadfully at night.'

'Mamma's gown is a trifle tight, to-night;' Louise has insinuated that 'Madame s'engraisse,' which is a deadly offence; so she relieves her feelings by bestowing a sort of rumbling dubitation on her daughter, on an accumulated score of small peccadilloes.

There is considerable jolting and rumbling, and much hoarse yelling of names, in Hill Street, so a disjointed and mangled edition of the lecture only reaches Pinkina's ears, and she is less awed and subdued than might be expected.

'Remember,' says mamma, to wind up, 'that I will not allow you to dance more than once with

any one *whosoever*—it is one of my rules.'

Where to, Miss Pink replies meekly, 'Yes, mamma.'

Wondering, meanwhile, what it can possibly signify, when they are all so exactly alike, she never can tell one from the other; and she dances as gladly with Frizzle and Fozzle of the Admiralty, as with Fritter and Twitter of the War Office.

Miss Pink has a hundred and twelve partners, and she does not know their names; she does not ever expect to know them: but there is one who has earned her eternal gratitude by wearing a little curly beard, and she always remembers his dance. And there is a lord, who has such very red hair that one cannot mistake him. What a pity they don't each have a mark! Would not a cipher tattooed on the cheek be a brilliant idea? Or cut in the whiskers—of such as have whiskers—as one sows a flame in mustard and cress, you know! Rather a poetic idea, eh! On the whole, Miss Pink is not sure that she appreciates the clerks, her cavaliers. She had visions of six foot heroes—like the pictures in 'Charles O'Malley,'—beautiful people, with long moustaches; whilst among her partners there is not a middle-sized moustache!! Poor dear Miss Pink! Mamma puts all her grievances in her pocket, as she goes up stairs, and smiling, bowing, and amiability in general goes on when that rubicon, the narrow door, is passed. It is quite possible to speak to three people at once—to recognise the acquaintances and to mark the likeliest place for a seat. A chaperone (a stout one especially) must have her wits about her, pretty much as a fox hunter in a crowd before a big fence. No one so sharp as Mrs. Pink. She avoids good-tempered Lady Anne Marygold, who is in her usual corner near the window, not for the supposed purpose of thereby obtaining fresh air, but that her three stout daughters may help her to keep the sashes closed. The dear old thing is rheumatic and cannot bear a draught. A battle goes on, as might be anticipated, between the oppressed dancers and her ladyship,

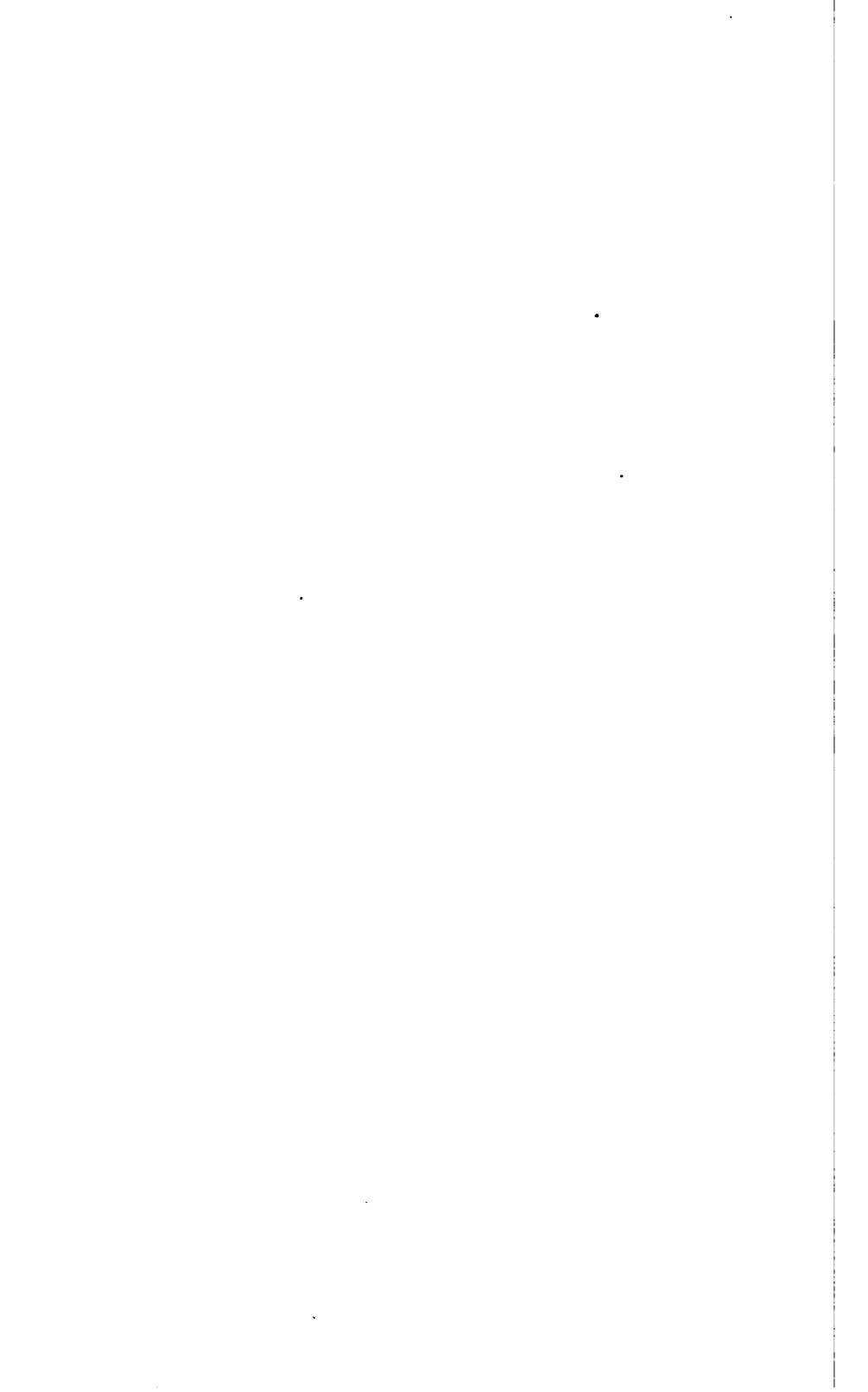




Drawn by S. A.

“‘Above all things be tidy’ was one of Fitz’s special advices.”

[See “Miss Pink’s First Season.”



for the right of way to the atmosphere, and one road to victory, alone, is open. Let there partners be found brave enough to risk their toes with the daughters, and let another hero entice the mamma to regions of lobster salad and champagne,—then—*then only* may 'the casement be thrown wide.'

Alas! as yet the solution of that great problem, 'whether any one can be found to dance with those patient graces' has not yet come off. Monotony characterises their part of the evening's proceedings,—monotony, diversified by fear or hope on the score of chicken and peaches, towards midnight. 'Will supper be attainable or not?' Not so with Miss Pink. She is in a tremendous state of mind at first, lest no one should dance with her,—lest her nose should be red,—lest her hair should be rough. Oh, dear! lest mamma should stay in the great room—and then it is so hot, and Miss Pink feels utterly miserable, for precisely two seconds, at the end of which period she perceives three of her pet partners coming towards her; that Laura Finch has her old green gown on again; that Dulcibella is not waltzing; and that Fitz, in his white waistcoat, is in the next room, looking as if he had lost his way.

Fitz always looks so, it is correct. You should give the young lady, whose hand you are soliciting for a valse, the impression that you are a philosopher bent on the discovery of the most abstruse sciences—non-chalant and slightly melancholy. It is the Faust valse, and Miss Pink is *lancée*, sailing round the rooms, before the crash begins, with little Wiffles of the Rifle Brigade.

Happy Wiffles! he is nephew of the house; had come up from Winchester on leave; did not expect to know a soul; had met and worshipped Pinkina at Bromley last autumn. Was *en quette* by the door when she came in, and is for the present and future a triumphant Wiffles.

Miss Pink fears no longer the fate of the Marygolds; she is specially popular to-night.

Pinkina writes in her journal after each ball—'that it has been even

more delightful than the last.' Of course one does not allude to that horrible one, at Mrs. Mésalliance's, where one's dress was all torn to shreds, where that horrible man, with long hair, squeezed one's hand in the Lancers, and was a nuisance in general by speechifying; where (worst of all misfortunes) one partner for the second galop never appeared to claim his privilege, but stayed in the tea room with some one else (Miss Pink saw him there). No, that ball is erased from the tablets of one's memory.

Pinkina is as good as gold about coming back to mamma. You see she has no 'little affair' going on yet. When the 'object' comes—the attaché with plaintive eyes, who has not yet been introduced there, because he has not quite finished breaking his heart for Dulcibella, the last year's beauty, but who means to begin breaking his heart for Pinkina next week—when, as we said, 'the object' comes on the stage, it will be more difficult to find mamma after the quadrille. The crowd will become so intense at that end of the room, one must have some ice. It will be so 'awfully hot inside.' She will not find her memory so keenly retentive as to 'next dances' as it is now. It will not be so easy to see Fritter and Twitter on the way to claim their waltzes. Miss Pink will be more easily tired, and will positively require a moment's repose in the little room, with chintz sofas, china shepherdesses, and gardenia plants.

Apropos, what capital stories those little rooms might tell if they would! The soft, big sofa, whereon such snoozes were hoped for (not in vain) by the weary chaperone, and such awful twaddle spoken by the clerks and their partners. Did not Finette sit a patient hour thereon, while the reticent squire, her present husband, hesitated to propose? Do not the photo-books, the anti-maccassars, the housemaid's dusters, and my lady's worsted work, find refuge beneath its shadow, till the festivities be overpast?

And what sighs of agony have relieved the overtaxed feelings of Frizzle when those admirable boots

of his became unbearable to his unhappy corns.

What execrations have found a smothered vent behind those curtains, when Fan Featherfoot would not dance with the Yorkshireman, her admirer, and waltzed off before his eyes with Sabretache of the Blues?

Those little rooms are in every one's confidence. My lady passes her 'evil half-hour' with the bills in that corner; Jeames, in lofty gloom, stands by that pretty door, stating how little he has been ac-

customed to cold mutton. Laura and Flora drink tea and talk of bonnets 'at five o'clock. And last, but not least, Sir Blank Nameless quotes there, to the unprotected listener, his own poetic effusions. 'The Forsaken of Eaton Place' and 'The Bereaved of Belgravia' owe much to those chintz-decked retreats.

Miss Pink has just been introduced to the 'object,' Frederick Vane, Esq., Attaché to her Majesty's legation at Dresden. 'She is so



MRS PINK'S PARTNERS.

[See p. 339.]

sorry she is engaged. Positively, not a dance to bestow.'

The lord with the red hair is for the next galop. That horrible Foozle has the last waltz—Foozle who kicks one, and who gets so soon giddy.

'Could not Foozle be thrown over?'

The 'object' is making an impression; he has such sad eyes, and such good gloves.

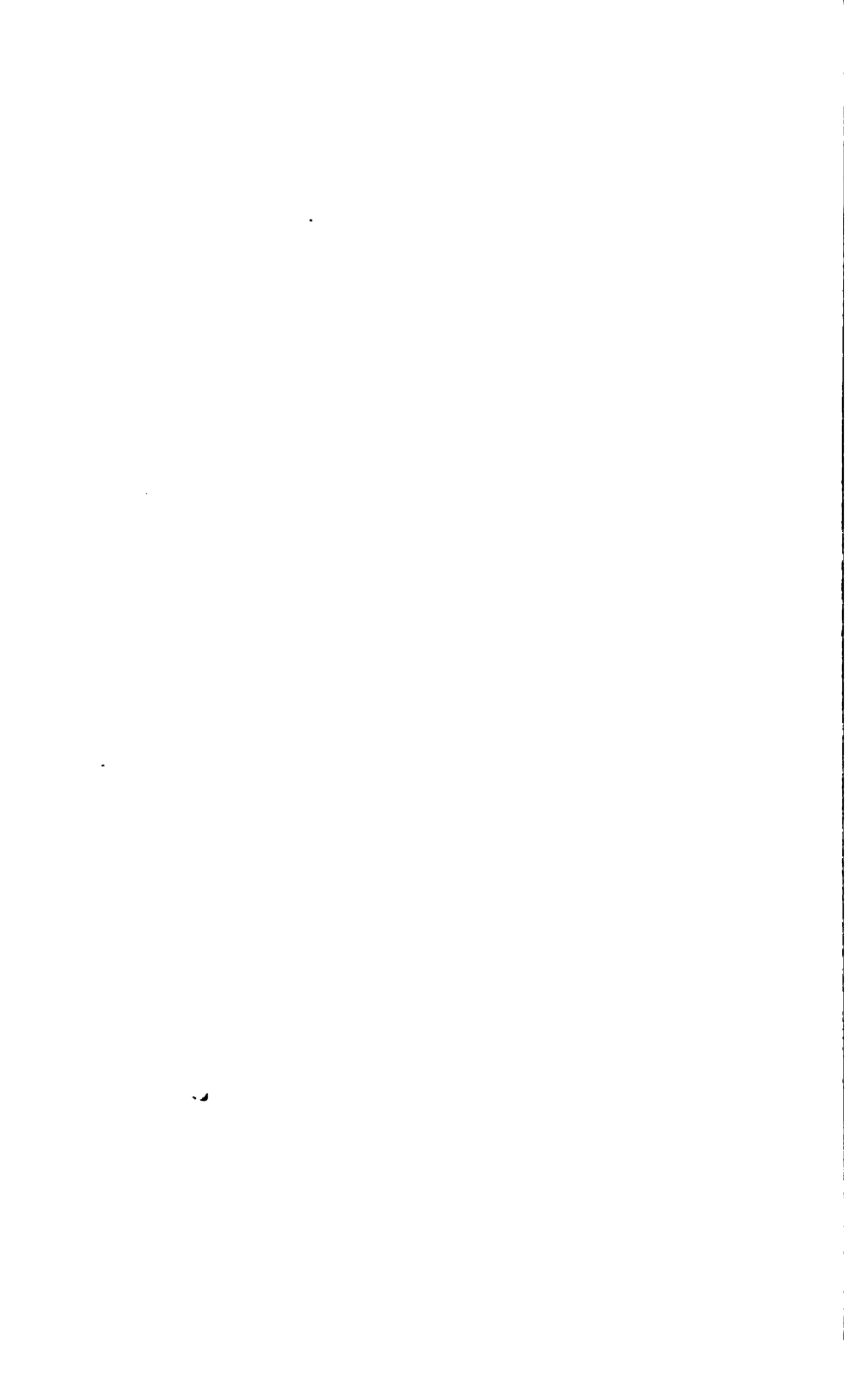
That dreadful Foozle! How she snubs him when his dance comes off. She begs him not to bump her so much against people. And she should prefer the other room. She

will not have any supper. She does not know his friend Gossip, and quenches Foozle's intention of presenting the friend.

Foozle is prostrated and fallen.

Pinkina is quite ready to go home. The 'object' is standing near the door, you see; looks like taking one to the carriage. 'Wouldn't dear mamma like to go? must be so very tired?'

Of course Fred Vane is waiting to take her down; and he is presented to mamma. He has a particularly good manner with mammas. 'Will not Mrs. Pink have some supper?' So charming to rest while





Drawn by S. A.

"The 'object' is making an impression; he has such sad eyes, and such good gloves."

[See "Miss Pink's First Season."

the carriage is being called! One forgets how one yawned last night when one had to wait, and how, but ten minutes ago, one's feet ached!

'Will Pinkina give him one dance next time?'

Yes, Pinkina will give him a dance.'

The Vane raises soft eyes in gratitude; Miss Pink is deeply impressed. 'Good-night, Miss Pink.'

These are Miss Pink's favourite

partners; and that is the divided state of her heart between their respective merits. It is a case of Box and Cox; when one is out the other in.

Number 1 waltzes all round her affections, but No. 2 sings like 'ten cherubs,' and he finds one out at concerts, and comes to five o'clock tea. It is neck and neck between Nos. 1 and 2.

No. 3 is chiefly exciting because he is at Aldershot, and has a play-



THE TALL BROTHER WHO IS FOND OF TEA.

[See p. 390.]

ful way of not appearing when he is expected, and of making unheard-of efforts, and risking arrests, to accept one's invitations to dinner.

It is not for his looks that No. 4 is loved, but for his inward qualities. The fact is, Miss Pink believes him to be consumed by a hopeless attachment to herself; and how can she help being fond of a victim—a

victim who provides her with monograms and helps her ball at croquet?

None of those are Frizzle or Foozle, nor are they Fritter or Twitter. Miss Pink esteems those young people but lightly now. She soars among secretaries and diplomatists; she has a dawning respect for the peerage. (In quadrilles—they

seldom waltz well.) The landed gentry are not much to Miss Pink; she don't mind them in Rotten Row: they ride good horses, but are apt to be ponderous and positive; and they have large whiskers—she doesn't like large whiskers—but, being a discernor in physiognomy, has discovered that a very slight silken moustache (whether it turn up or down signifies not) is an indication of merit.

Miss Pink has a dear friend, with

whom she goes to tea at five o'clock. The friend is older than Miss Pink, and has charms and qualities which inspire Pinkina with reverence and awe. She 'does her hair' in a wonderful way; it looks as if it (the hair) had taken fright at something and fled to the back of her head, where it was caught and hung up by a ribbon.

The friend knows a great deal of the world, and gives such good advice; and has a brother (which is



'HOW SADLY THE MASK FALLS FROM THE FACE OF SOCIETY IN THE CLOAK-ROOM.'

[See p. 392.]

more to the purpose)—a tall brother, who is fond of tea. He is not a clerk—he is not anything in particular; he is rather eligible than otherwise, but not ponderous. He does not wear particularly good gloves, but he is 'very nice.' Mrs. Pink is always charmed that her dear child should go to see her friend.

The brother has drawn such a

beautiful design in her monogram book—all pipes and beer-jugs, twisted into every possible shape.

Sometimes the friend's mother comes in, and insists on hearing Miss Pink sing—which is dreadful. Pinkina requires a good deal of persuasion.

'Now, just *one little* one. I know you do sing charmingly.'

Chorus: 'Oh, do, do sing!'

Pinkina grows very hot.

'Oh, indeed, indeed, not at all; scarcely *ever*, in fact.' She doesn't sing now; she never practises; and she has forgotten *every* thing; indeed, she assures them, *every* thing.

'Oh do, now!' The brother is so fond of singing. 'Ever so simple a ballad.' 'Please, a ballad.'

Chorus: 'Oh, yes, now *do*!'

Miss Pink has taken off her gloves

and turned round her chair, relenting. She becomes afresh restive at the last 'propos.'

Oh dear! she doesn't know anything 'English—only Italian things—only *one* Italian thing out of 'Semiramide;' and it is a duet; and there is no one to sing the first part.

That does not matter in the least. The friend's mamma is resolved she shall sing. When people begin to



'THE CONCERT WAS CHARMING.'

ask for music, they are like calves running before a carriage—you can by no means stop or turn them.

So Pinkina begins; she forgets the words; she suffers horribly; the piano is out of tune; but when it is finished they applaud her so immensely that she believes it can only have been her own ears that heard the evil sounds she has produced; and her determination *never* to sing again is shaken.

'Goodness, where is the cloak? Mrs. Pink's cloak?'

Pinkina does not half like the tussle that takes place before going away. The concert has been lovely, charming. To be sure, one was wedged in between the Marygolds, and Laura and Flora were behind, and the Ladies Catt in front—who are so *very* thin—and not a man could get near one; and only that stupid Spurs to speak to down-

stairs; not one of one's 'particulars' to be seen. But still how perfectly the people did sing! How divine! how superb! how *very pretty* it all was! and how one's gown is crushed! Lady Sunflower looks quite refreshed; she had a nap during 'Parige o Cara,' that was worth ten snoozes at a drum. She will not have such another till next Sunday.

Lady Sunflower has her own bag; you can see a huge T. S. in yellow braid on it when, after a long plunge, she hoists the unshapely body aloft.

Mrs. Seefar has no bag; but she is so sharp—so sharp, that not the sleepest handmaid can defraud her of her gear.

'Number nine hundred and sixty-seven, please,' she squeaks; 'the big bundle under the second chair in the corner; three red cloaks, one brown shawl, a white one, a fur boa, and a pair of overshoes—all tied up together.'

She is an excellent, careful mother; she pins a handkerchief over her own head, ties the fur boa round her throat, and rushes at her daughters.

'Here Alexiny! Seraphiny!' (Mrs. Seefar is of Scottish extraction) 'put *this* on, *quick*, now! put it up tight; don't catch cold.'

Seraphiny is in no hurry; two minutes more, and Twaddle, of the Inner Temple (he is an elder son), will be there, and to him might fall the privilege of disposing one of the red cloaks around her fair shoulders.

How sadly the mask falls from the face of society in the cloak-room! The bland gentlemen, the demure dames of middle age, how fierce, how oburgatory they become when their belongings are buried too deep, or the carriage can nowhere be discovered!

How the jaws are distended, and the brows lowered, of those calm, dignified daughters; and how meanly does the nobler sex step out, with a cigar, to escape anxious quests for the missing footmen. Few and far between are the gentle youths who will hunt up carriages—few, and not always highly valued or adequately rewarded by the dam-

sels for whose sakes they bruise their toes and risk their shiny boots in by-streets.

Pinkina herself has had to tuck up her petticoats and her dignity, and dodge under the horses' heads to the other side of the square, where faithful Jeames had been desired to have the carriage in waiting, like modest Mr. Gilpin, 'two doors off.'

The cloak-room is verily a test as great, of temper and courage, as that much maligned field, the croquet ground.

Pinkina is not fond of morning calls; but she does not dislike those that take her across Oxford Street, because one is close to 'M—— and S——'; and there is sure to be half a yard more of something indispensable to Louise which can be got nowhere else; and then, oh, delight indescribable, gowns, cloaks, gloves, ties, ribbons, little belts, big belts, what is there not there? First time Pinkina went to M—— and S—— in solemn procession, to lay in stores of vanities for the season, she was awed and depressed.

The piles and piles of folded material speckled and spotted, like Jacob's flock, that waylaid her if but a corner in her eye were unoccupied by the great counters of temptation; the stores of wonderful handkerchiefs, of reduced grêle muffs and cuffs that prowled in unforeseen angles. The supercilious Belgravian girls in pinched bonnets and their oldest muslins, that pushed aside in their diligent hunt for toggery, *du plus neuf*; the blond damsels in sweeping black silks, that insinuated themselves into Zouave jackets and big cloaks, and waved their slim figures before the mirrors to ensnare stout country ladies, by a delusive idea that the garment would produce a similar effect on their respectable backs; all tended to confuse and overpower Miss Pink: but the day came when she, too, peregrinated calmly in a pinched bonnet, and tightly-tied veil, over prostrate dresses and conglomerated mantles; and it was there that Miss Pink bought her broad belt.

She is not quite satisfied that it

is a becoming addition to her wardrobe. Query, Does the waist look as small in it as in a narrow one? Pinkina has imprisoned herself pretty securely therein, but the effect disappoints her. Tom, the Eton brother, is sarcastic and personal in his remarks; supposes it is a bandage to bind up Pinkina's broken heart; asks if it is the cholera belt; manifests an undesirable amount of wit on the subject. 'Tuppence extra for manners' has not been bestowed on Tom with success.

We regret extremely that this should be Miss Pink. [See page 385.] Mrs. Pink has not the least idea where she is—Mrs. Pink, who makes it a rule *always* to know where she is. We repeat our regret that this should be Miss Pink. And that is not the lord with the red hair who is asking for the rose. Not even the Lincolnshire baronet, nor that lately bereaved owner of Fleshpots Abbey, of whom Mrs. Pink has so (justly) high an opinion. Nor is it Fred Vane; even he has expectations. It is the youngest of younger sons,



THE BROAD BELT.

Harry Goodlack, who goes out to India next week, and who is not even anybody's nephew!

He is morbid upon the subject of Pinkina. 'He may keep the flower, mayn't he? Oh, is she going already? Is she tired of sitting there? Please not to go yet, just one minute more; it may be years and years, &c. Burning skies of India, &c.'—deep sighs, *ad libitum*. 'One must meet one's fate with what courage one can; from the moment he first saw her, and so on. Does she

remember? She had a blue ribbon in her hair?' This is all very nice, but just fancy Mrs. Pink's feelings all the time!

Pinkina will put it all down in her journal, and she will cry a little, and look out of the window when she goes home; but the chances are, that the cats will spring miauling from the leads below, and a smut fall pensively from above on her upturned nose, and Miss Pink will shut the window, and wash her face, and consign Ensign Goodlack to

oblivion, as is her duty. 'Heartless woman,' eh? Wait a moment. The heartbroken lover, what will he do? He will think of Pinkina when he is not thinking of something else, or being as seasick as he was last voyage; and he will find the pretty speeches and languid glances he bestowed on Miss Pink come in very nicely, warmed up, for his desperate

affaire du cœur with Miss Bangles at Bubblepore.

'Brings people so nicely together.' This is the correct thing to say of croquet; as if one were not tired to death of being brought together—dear me!

Oh! weariness and abomination, to be 'brought' into a dusty square,



to eat the perpetual strawberry to the sound of the eternal brass band, under the eyes of the youthful population of the crossing.

When Pinkina has an entirely new and killing get-up, and a hat of unusual wickedness, she doesn't mind it so much; besides, bronze boots and red heels are appreciated

at croquet; but still, what a nuisance to have to hold a mallet when you have a parasol, and a coffee cup in your two hands, and then Jack Clip looks so hopelessly dismal if you don't pay attention to the game; and none of the nice ones play—none of the 'objects' except No. 4, and she is quite tired of him.

Fred Vane is apt to dawdle under a tree with Dulcibella (whereas Pinkina hates Dulcibella and would be very glad to see her bonnet crushed or her hair out of order), and then the Sunflower girls get hold of Spurs and de Butes, (de Butes is No. 2,) and sit on chairs and talk; and one can't sit down oneself for half a second before a distracted host runs up with a mallet, and implores one to join a game—'Won't one play?' and his object being usually to dispose of a given number of mallets, he thrusts it into one's newly-gloved hand, or drops it on one's toes, or at all events breaks the thread of one's little ideas; and we all know how rare an idea is in London, and how tenaciously it should be retained and spun to its utmost limits. Pinkina never loses her temper at croquet—oh dear, no, (?)—well yes, of course she doesn't mean to deny she was a little provoked that day in Berkeley Square; but it was not because her ball was croqueted away so often, she did not care two straws about that; but it was so absurd of Dulcibella to go on in the way she did, pretending the balls would not remain steady unless Fred Vane held them when she put her foot on them. Mr. Vane must have hated kneeling there, Pinkina thinks; and then really how shockingly Dulcibella spooned—spooned so openly—Pinkina does not mean a pun, she is quite above punning on such a subject. But it grieves her for the dignity of the sex, that such conduct should be too sadly common at the present day. It fully accounts to her for the conduct and the opinions of so many of the men she knows, and it is too bad, too hard, on those who do not, &c. Miss Pink becomes slightly morbid, and her phraseology particularly involved on the subject of croquet towards the end of the season. Pinkina's symmetrical ankles ache with continual standing under blackened trees; her eyes are weary of the sight of red and black balls. It is *toujours perdrix*; and alas! the taste for lemon ice begins to pall even on her fresh young senses. It is becoming impossible to discover a new trimming for dresses; so

many have been invented and worn out. Mamma Pink is beginning to say, 'Your green and white will do perfectly well for the end of the time,' and 'I do not mean to give you another bonnet.' When it comes to 'no more bonnets,' it is high time to leave town.

Pinkina feels herself a wiser, and, for the time, a sadder young woman. She has written three pages in her journal on the knowledge of human nature to be acquired during a sojourn in London, and she has developed some very fine and original ideas, which she rather thinks would benefit society if more widely circulated. Such as 'People crowd their rooms too much; one's pleasure and one's dress suffer equally. Men are too apt to tread on one's dress when it is long behind. *Old* young ladies would be better employed in teaching their little nephews and nieces than in filling up the Lancers that are already too crowded!' The last cutting sarcasm was written with dashes and notes of exclamation in the journal after Lady Sunflower, 'the dansante,' and was, we fear, levelled at those mature persons, the daughters of her ladyship's sister. Also Miss Pink records, that one should not trust too much to the civil speeches of mankind in general (and of Fitz in particular); which moral remark was indited shortly after her return from that pic-nic, whereat the recreant Fitz had manifested such renewed allegiance, such fresh devotion. Fitz is a time-server; Fitz has observed Pinkina's success in the eyes of men, and has meanly placed her colours in his cap, after assuring himself that he is thereby only following the fashion; and Pinkina writes morally on the matter, writes most wisely, and acts (as she should do) exactly in the reverse of her proposed line of conduct. She is immensely kind to Fitz, believes in him implicitly, deposes two or three peculiar objects to erect a special throne for him, and confides such of her sentiments to his sympathetic ear as have weighed most deeply on what she is pleased to call her heart. We have our doubts as to the full development of that very apocry-

phal part of the human frame in Miss Pink. Query, In one's first season is there even time for such a thing? It is, we should say, best left at home—the heart—or lent by a prudent young lady to her mamma, to be placed out at the best interest for her.

Pinkina is going out of town now; she has such a store of horrible old gowns and gloves and shoes,

she means to make a bonfire of them, and with the survivors of her glories she will astonish the weak minds at the county ball, and will perplex the curate's daughter at home. She is in a great hurry—has a thousand things to do—shopping, she must rush off to Mrs. Brown's, and to M—— and S——. Adieu, Pinkina!

POLITENESS, INSULAR AND CONTINENTAL.

WITHOUT politeness the world of men would be little better than the world of brutes. Civilised men are far from unanimous; but then they agree to differ civilly. In society people often make war; but in good society they never declare it. Good breeding requires that even enemies should avoid offensive forms and expressions. You may go out with a man to shoot him through the heart in a duel, but you must bow to him politely first. An insult may even be returned politely. When Lauzun broke his sword in the presence of Louis XIV., saying, 'I will no longer serve a king who does not keep his word,' the king threw his cane out of the window, adding, 'It shall never be said that I have thrashed a man of noble birth!' The thrashing was given morally, and the outraged royal dignity was fully satisfied.

As to polite rebukes, they are not uncommon, and are far more easy to administer. Frederick, called the Great, of Prussia, was at least a very great snuff-taker. To save the trouble of continually putting his hand in his pocket, he had a snuff-box on the chimney-piece of every room in the suite of rooms he occupied. One day, when busy in his cabinet, he saw a page, who fancied he was not observed, unceremoniously tasting the royal snuff. He took no further notice at the time; but about an hour afterwards he ordered the page to bring him the box.

'Take a pinch,' said the king. 'How do you find it?'

'Excellent, sire.'

'And the box?'

'Superb, sire.'

'Very well, sir; keep it, then. It hardly holds enough for us two.'

Politeness lends an additional charm to every kind of social intercourse. It is to society what perfect tune is to the keyboard of a piano. Every member of society should be polite and decorous, just as every note in the musical scale ought to sound its exact pitch amongst the other notes. A knowledge of what politeness requires will often prevent discordant sounds.

The study of the social code adopted by the world in which we move is, therefore, necessary for whoever wishes to figure creditably in that world. But rules alone are not sufficient; there are exceptional occasions when they fail to apply, and in which we must be guided by the *spirit* of courtesy. Deference to others, obedience to elders, submission to rank and authority, are the very essence of that spirit. George III. once complimented Dr. Johnson in highly flattering terms respecting his writings. Somebody asked the doctor, 'And what did you say to all that?'

'Nothing,' was the judicious reply. 'Was I to bandy compliments with my sovereign?' He accepted the royal approbation, as was his duty.

A new ambassador, Lord S——, whose social tact was highly spoken of, arrived at the court of Louis XIV. The king, wishing to test his politeness, invited him to a shooting-party. At the moment of starting

to drive to the wood, the king, drawing back, gave him the precedence, saying, 'Get into the carriage, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur.' Lord S—— did not wait to be twice told to do so. Instead of humbly retreating and attempting to decline so great an honour, he obeyed at once; thus treating the royal invitation as an order which he was not even permitted to discuss. The king, who was the politest man of his day, perfectly appreciated the move, and remarked, with a smile, 'Decidedly, Lord S—— is a well-bred man.'

It is often, therefore, the truest politeness simply to do what you are requested to do.

Politeness is not exactly a virtue, but an imitation and assumption of certain virtues. It induces us to appear kind, self-denying, indulgent, modest, because it would be uncivil and rude to appear the contrary. We are polite for our own sakes quite as much as for other people's. Politeness is the art of disguising our feelings and passions rather than of repressing them; it is a sense of propriety rather than of justice; it does not make a man better, but it renders him infinitely more sociable—as is indicated by the derivation of the word itself and its synonyms. The root of politeness is *polis*, a town; courtesy comes to us from courts; and civility, *civilitas*, according to Ainsworth, is the courtesy which citizens use to one another. Politeness, not content with avoiding everything that can possibly displease, continually and actively strives to please. It modifies the demeanour as well as the conduct, and adds a charm to the most trifling actions. When simply and naturally practised and without any affectation, it almost amounts to friendship and affection.

The forms of politeness have varied greatly in different ages of the world, and they still differ in several of their details in different countries even of Europe. Differences of religion and of political institutions naturally have their effect on the manners of a nation. In the course of time those effects accumulate, and show themselves

in discrepancies of etiquette. Each thus acquires a little code of by-laws, which must be obeyed by all who mix much with that particular group or race of mankind. We may, however, safely assert that, as French is the language of courts and diplomacy, so French manners are upon the whole the rule in good continental society.

All men in England are equal before the law; but our social inequality is great. What a gap between the squire and the labourer! The labourer takes off his hat to the squire, but the squire does not take off his hat to him. What an abyss between the riders in Rotten Row and the orators and their audience in the park, met to discuss Garibaldi's departure! English society is made up of a series of sets, cliques, or coteries—castes they can hardly be called, since the position they give is not unalterable—each of which looks down upon that which is, or which it fancies below itself. On the Continent generally political liberty and equality may be less, but social equality is greater. Parisian electors cannot meet to discuss politics in numbers exceeding twenty; public meetings are not to be thought of; political agitation is almost a crime; but at Parisian public fêtes and in places of public resort, every individual has an equal right and an equal standing, which no other individual may infringe or gainsay. The public voice upholds this principle of comparative equality; the nation prides itself on the national politeness. Woe be to any one who, by pretentious airs or discourtesy, attempts to 'try it on,' whether insolence and arrogance cannot gain social mastery. A severe lesson is in store for him or her—if the would-be bully is not at once snuffed out by ridicule.

Pau is a curious town, a favourite resort of invalids and idlers, whose population consequently consists of a certain number of inhabitants and a very great many strangers. Everybody lets furnished apartments, from the humblest citizen to the highest personage. Generals, counts, and marquises advertise their rooms 'with a south aspect and a fine view

of the Pyrenees.' There is no harm in this; it is excessively convenient; but it lately gave occasion for a sharp retort.

Madame C——, the wife of one of the richest merchants in Paris, was remarked for the elegance of her dress. Such elegance, displayed by a simple commoner, displeased one of the noble dames of Pau, Madame la Comtesse d'Asterisk.

'What do you call *that*?' she said, contemptuously glancing at the Parisienne.

'That is Madame C——,' was replied to her.

'Ah! yes, I know,' the Comtesse answered. 'She's a linendraper.'

Madame C——, who overheard every word of the conversation, inquired in turn, loud enough to be heard, and pointing with her finger to the haughty lady, 'What do you call *that*?'

'It is Madame d'Asterisk.'

'Ah! yes, I know. She's a letter of lodgings. We think of taking her rooms next season.'

Attention to one's outward appearance is one of the first elements of politeness. Want of cleanliness, slovenly or dilapidated attire, are an affront to the persons we approach. Anything like dirtiness—the very word offends—is utterly unpardonable and inadmissible. Man, naturally the nudest of animals, has necessarily the greatest need of personal neatness. Most of the nations of antiquity bathed daily, or oftener. Ablutions were, and still are in many countries, a religious practice. Perfumes are quite gone out of fashion, being left to be used almost exclusively by persons of questionable health, or worse, of questionable character.

Dress is a serious consideration, both socially and sumptuously. For men, simplicity is the rule, together with a slowness to adopt the newest and extremest fashions. Masculine costume is much more uniform now than when almost every grade and profession had each its characteristic dress. Dress was once a mark of caste, and only another form of social tyranny. John Kirby, the grandfather of the entymologist, a land-surveyor and schoolmaster, in

one of his letters speaks of wearing mourning on the death of a near relation as being incompatible with his rank, and that the neighbouring gentry would be displeased were he to presume to put it on. But the first French Revolution had a powerful influence in levelling costume, and the tendency is to still greater uniformity—as most ladies who have housemaids are well aware. The attorney is scarcely to be distinguished from the Member of Parliament, the barrister from the artist. French violinists, however, M. Comettant tells us—all Frenchmen, indeed, who assume to be *distingué*—have the habit of keeping their black dress coat buttoned in front.

Neat, becoming, simple dress, well befitting the age of the wearer and without the least extravagance in any way, is an indication of good sense and orderly conduct. To dress with propriety, is both to respect others and to respect one's self. It is curious that even people who neglect themselves still like to see those about them smart and tidy.

Black coat and pantaloons are indispensable in France for a first or specially formal call, a grand dinner, or a ball. In some towns, the dress-coat is insisted upon, even for concerts; in case of doubt, therefore, you will keep on the safe side by wearing it. A white waistcoat is more *grande cérémonie* than a black one; the same as to the cravat. A hat as brilliant as polished jet, shining varnished boots or *bottines*—for shoes, even varnished, are *négligé*, and call to mind the waiters at restaurants—together with perfect gloves, are points respecting which two opinions are not permitted.

Gloves are an item of such importance, that they cannot be dismissed without a word in passing. The proverb says 'Bien ganté et bien chaussé, on va partout.'—'Well gloved and well shod, you may present yourself anywhere.' There are occasions which allow you to dispense with gloves, as when gardening, fishing, or indulging in other open-air recreations allowed to gentlemen; but there is no occasion on which you may appear

with holey, greasy, shabby gloves. In the very highest society, the same pair of gloves may not be worn twice; at least they must never betray the slightest trace of having been worn. Morning gloves, walking gloves, calling gloves, evening gloves, must be ever spotless, fresh, and new. Consequently, the glover's bill is one of the heaviest items of the personal budget. M. Mortemart-Boisse states that a man of fashion may easily spend eighteen thousand francs, or seven hundred and twenty pounds a year, on gloves. Those who have less than seven hundred a year must compromise the matter as well as they can.

Soon after the Lady Bianca Biancaville disgraced herself by a love-match with Mr. Nero Nobody, I happened to dine at a wealthy mansion. Of course, everybody had their word to say.

'Poor things!' observed a dowager by my side. 'They have only eight hundred a year between them.'

'No more!' exclaimed the lady of the house. 'Why that will only just serve them for gloves.'

'It is very lucky for me,' I said, 'that it is not yet the fashion to dine in gloves; for I never had eight hundred a year, and most likely never shall.'

The fine folks present were good enough not to appear shocked at my bold confession of gloveless poverty, but bore it with the equanimity with which we support other people's sorrows.

Gloves should fit like a second skin, and be worn buttoned at the wrist. A French authority (Alphonse Karr) tells you to take a gentleman's hand with your own ungloved, in token of frankness and sincerity; but to keep your glove on when you touch a lady's, as a proof of the respect with which you regard her. Gloves also have their court etiquette. If you are honoured by the Pope with an audience, his secret chamberlain, Monsignore Borromeo, begs you to take off your gloves before entering. 'The Holy Father,' he tells you, 'like the Holy Communion, is approached only with ungloved hands.' I suppose it was in obedience to a similar rule

that the sorceresses of old, as Canidia and Saganas, took out their false teeth, and took off their false hair before they set to work to raise the ghosts of the dead.

The cravat merits more attention than is often bestowed upon it. It meets you face to face every time you converse with a gentleman; you cannot help observing it. It is the pedestal, as it were, on which the whole of the countenance is based. An ill-tied, wisped-up, muddled cravat is enough to prejudice you against a new acquaintance. Of all our articles of clothing, it is the only one which is a proof of the wearer's personal taste and skill. We draw on our stockings, we pull on our boots, we slip on our coat, and we put on our hat; but we are obliged to adjust and tie our cravat. Stocks, with false and ready-made bows, convenient enough for people who dress in a hurry, will be disdained by the really well-dressed man, almost as much as paper shirt-collars.

'What have you got there?' somebody asked of Brummel's valet, as he left his master's dressing-room with a huge bundle of crumpled white cravats under his arm.

'These are our failures,' he replied. 'Happily we have succeeded at last.'

To tie a cravat well, requires patience, tact, a keen perception of graceful form, and great delicacy of manipulation combined with decision. One of these days, I must shut myself up for a week in strict seclusion, to improve and experiment in the art of tying a white cravat.

The differential aspects of the hat, at home and abroad, are noteworthy. With us, its principal office is to cover the head and keep it warm—which was why the celebrated miller wore a white one. Elsewhere, indeed, the word *couvre-chef* implies the same; besides which, the hat is to the gentleman what the fan is to the lady, an implement of coquetry, an aid to deportment, a means of expressing sentiment. A hat, on the Continent, has very hard and endless work to do. Your hatter will recommend

you one with a stiff brim, *pour saluer*, for bowing service; for, remember, you must take your hat quite off your head, to gentlemen as well as to ladies, and often even to inferiors, under pain of being considered *mal élevé*, ill-bred. Merely touching your hat and nodding, is far too familiar and unceremonious, except in the case of great intimacy. To show how thoroughly they salute you (not doing it by halves), some people, who wear caps, will seize that covering by the crown, grasping it with the open hand, and so remove it bodily.

The hat has its eloquence as well as the eye. Made to descend very low, when off, it savours of the pride which apes humility. The degree of its elevation, the position in which it is held, the length of time it is kept in suspense before returning to its place, the motion of the arm, all telegraph the wearer's feelings.

So useful an article enjoys its privileges; it is admitted to evening parties and must not be laid aside, except for the purposes of musical performance or taking refreshment. When, speaking to a lady in the street, you remove your hat, you may not replace it until she tells you. Not to return a bow in kind, is arrogant; not to return it at all, is an insult which may lead to fatal consequences. In a bank, on the Continent, it is unpolite to keep the hat on, as we do; in a synagogue, it is irreverent to take it off. At the baths of Leuk (Switzerland), you are admitted gratis to see ladies and gentlemen bathing together in the interior basin, on the sole condition of shutting the door after you and taking off your hat. If you omit either form, a score of voices will soon call you to order. So much for the spectators; the bathers there are forbidden to enter into religious controversy—a prohibition which seems needless, as, practically, all are Baptists.

In several Northern and German capitals, when you do obeisance in the streets to passing kaisers, kings, grand dukes, or reigning serene highnesses and transparencies, you are expected not to pass on yourself

while you take your hat off, but to stand stock still until the act of reverence is completed. Not to salute the lady at the counter, or the assembled company, on entering a café, restaurant, cercle, estaminet, or public room, is, in foreign parts generally, a very capital omission.

As to ladies' dress, gentlemen are allowed little more than a financial interference with it. All they have to do, is to admire, and pay the bill. Still we may hint that a lady, receiving guests, will carefully avoid eclipsing them by her garments or ornaments. She will be underdressed, rather than not, in order to let them shine with greater éclat. Away from home, she will dress to do honour to her host and hostess; at home, so as to do honour to her visitors. In neither case should the gratification of her own personal vanity be the object in view.

Probably the two sumptuary extremes of female dress in Europe are to be found in France and Sweden respectively; the former country spending all, the latter economizing all she can. Next to the American civil war, women's dress in Paris is the most extravagantly expensive thing going. A woman will hang about her person her husband's whole income and her children's fortune. 'A Camellia,' says Michelet—i. e. a light-charactered lady—'will engulf (for her toilette) more than a whale.' The Court sets the example of expensiveness: it is a tradition of the empire. Napoleon I. privately lectured a Préfet of the Seine for coming to the Tuileries in a hired carriage; and he openly scolded a lady for appearing before him in a dress which he recognized as an old acquaintance, asking her whether her husband's pay was not sufficient to buy a new gown. Ladies now invited to Compiègne or Fontainebleau for a week, are expected never to wear the same morning or evening dress twice, which amounts to fourteen new dresses for the visit, at least; for if a lady chose to wear three dresses a day, nothing is easier than to find opportunities of displaying them. Say that a lady moving in high Parisian society,

can contrive to manage, with the very moderate allowance of only five new dresses per week during a three months' season, it makes a little total of sixty dresses. Calculate the cost of these at a minimum price, and it still comes to a heavy amount; reckon it at a maximum, and it is enough to make a Rothschild look grave.

The Swedes, on the contrary, not being rich, try to make a respectable appearance by a small expenditure. At the ball given at the Exchange of Stockholm, to the royal family, on the New-Year's Day, by the bourgeoisie, in which every trade is represented, the rule is that all the ladies, the Queen included, appear in black; *because* everybody is supposed to have the means of buying a black silk dress. A black silk dress, it is taken for granted, is to be found in every citizeness's wardrobe. Coloured ribbons, trimmings, flowers, feathers, and jewels may be superadded *ad libitum*. A lady may put on at that ball ten thousand pounds' worth of diamonds, if she have them; but a black top and skirt must be the groundwork of the whole.

On the same economical principle, the maids of honour and ladies in waiting on the Queen of Sweden must dress in black when on duty (except on the occasion of a wedding or a christening); when not in attendance, they may wear black, or not, as pleases them best. Their distinctive mark from other ladies are white satin sleeves, barred with black.

If the French *versus* the Swedish system of dress were put to the vote of the assembled fathers and husbands—ay, and the suitors too—of Europe—which, do you think, would gain the majority?

No one is fond of making calls. Calls are certainly a great waste of time. Still, calling must be done, and, therefore, may as well be done properly. There are a few members of society whose time is valuable, and fully occupied—medical men, authors, lawyers, statesmen—who, by a rebellious effort, emancipate themselves, generally, from making or returning calls. They

get their calling done by their wives, or leave it undone. But the omission is hazardous, especially at the outset of a man's career. It may get excused, or it may not. The higher his position in the world, the more rigorously is he obliged to comply with the observances due to his equals; so that he is far from being absolved from the duty. The parties who fancy themselves neglected or slighted without sufficient reason are naturally more or less offended. When a man's rank or office is in any way representative or ornamental, he is more than ever bound to comply with the routine of formal visiting.

I was once present in a foreign capital when a lady—a British subject—managed, on some trifling grounds, to get the English minister to call upon her at her hotel. He came, attended. On discovering the slight importance of the case, he was very stiff and curt, and, on leaving, slammed the door after him so loudly, that every one on the same floor of the house could hear it. However frivolous the lady's pretext to induce him to come might be, was he right in expressing his opinion by slamming the door? The object of his residence in that city was, that he might see and be seen, might listen to and answer the applications of his countrymen. Above all, a diplomatist is forbidden by his office ever to show temper, quite as much as he would by Talleyrand ever to manifest zeal.

Business visits are altogether exempted from the rules which apply to calls in general. The person who receives them is not bound to offer any other civility than his attention. He is not required to rise at the entrance of an applicant, nor to acknowledge his departure with more than a bow. In short, the truest politeness during business visits is for one party to be as brief and explicit, and the other as obliging and communicative as possible. The same applies to business letters.

One great difference in calling, at home and abroad, is, that here new comers wait to be called upon, while, elsewhere, they are the first to present themselves to the persons

whom they wish or feel entitled to visit. An approach to the foreign system is pointed out by *Ayayes*, in his 'Hints on Etiquette': 'When a family arrive in London, they should send out cards to their acquaintance, to inform them of that event, as well as of their address.' According to the same authority, with us, when a wedding takes place in a family, the cards of the newly-married pair are sent round to all their acquaintances, to apprise them of the event. The cards are sent out by the bridegroom to his acquaintances, and by the parents of the bride to theirs. In some instances the cards have been united by silken or silver cords; but this mode has not been adopted by people of fashion.

After the honeymoon, or on their return from the wedding trip, the young people 'sit up,' or remain at home, to receive company. In France no wedding-cards are sent; but the parents of the bride and bridegroom distribute letters of *faire part* to such a wide circle—to persons with whom they have the slightest acquaintance—that the object would appear to be less a civility than a public advertisement of the circumstance. Thus people in business send letters of *faire part* to distant persons and customers with whom they have merely business connections. A quite sufficient acknowledgment of the attention is to return your own card by post in an unsealed envelope. As soon as possible—sometimes only two or three days—after the wedding, the new-married couple call on the friends, beginning with their nearest relations, with whom they wish to live on terms of intimacy. The calls are duly returned, and matters then settle down into the regular routine which is supposed to occur after 'the end' of the third volume of a fashionable novel.

Of course, you rise to receive and welcome visitors, and see them seated before resuming your own seat. Dismissing them is an affair of greater complexity and delicacy. It makes some difference whether the reception-room is on the first floor, as in a London house, or on a level

with the hall, as in a country mansion. In England, it is permitted, when visitors rise to take leave, to ring and allow the servant to accompany them to the door; abroad, the only excuse for not doing so yourself, is the presence of other visitors, whom you cannot leave to conduct those who are departing. True politeness, indeed, would induce you to show how unwilling you are to part with your guests by remaining with them as long as you can, instead of losing sight of them as soon as possible.

'The Habits of Good Society,' by far the fullest and completest recent English work on the subject, tells us that 'ceremonial visits must be made the day after a ball, when it will suffice to leave a card; within a day or two after a dinner-party, when you ought to make the visit personally, unless the dinner was a semi-official one, such as the lord mayor's; and within a week of a small party, when the call should certainly be made in person. All these visits should be short, lasting from twenty minutes to half an hour at the most.'

A week is the utmost limit for returning a formal visit; to exceed it, gives great offence. When General Rostolan, a strict disciplinarian, succeeded the Duke of Reggio as Commander-in-Chief of the French forces at Rome, he called, accompanied by his staff, on each of the five cardinals who then formed the Provisional Executive Committee.

Eight days elapsed; not an eminence stirred; the general awaited them in vain. On the ninth, he sent them word that if they did not call on him in the course of the day, he should feel himself obliged, very much to his regret, to assert his own dignity, and the respect due to his official position, by sending a picket of foot-soldiers to fetch them.

The knocker is nearly obsolete in England. The next generation will have to study its varieties in museums. Not so in many continental towns. It may, therefore, be as well to remark, that the roudades and solo performances on that instrument, for which our footmen

were celebrated, will hardly bear exportation. In fact, they would cause more surprise than pleasure, as has sometimes happened even at home. 'The Roman Assembly' ('The Habits' tells us) 'used to break up if thunder was heard; and in days of yore a family assembly was often broken up very hurriedly at the thunder of the knocker, one or other of the daughters exclaiming, "I'm not dressed, mamma!" and darting from the room.'

Our 'Knock and Ring' is an invitation to noise, as well as a confession of the dispersed state of the family—of a house divided. You are tacitly requested to give a stout pull, to wake up the servants dozing down-stairs, and also to sound an audible notice of your arrival to the occupants of the drawing-room aloft. A French *juge de paix* or other magistrate will call at your door with a knock as unpretending as the postman's. Violent tugging at the bell is only permitted when the bell won't speak without it. A common inscription outside office doors is, *Entrez sans frapper*, 'Come in without knocking.' The drollest notice of the kind on record occurred during the first French Republic. It inculcated the social equality and fraternity of every citizen, thus: *Ici on se tutoie. - Fermez la porte, s'il vous plaît*, 'Here people are addressed as thou and thee. Shut the door, if you please.'

When the person on whom you call is absent, or not visible, you leave your visiting card—a happy invention. It is usual to turn up the corner or end of the card when delivering it to the servant; about the interpretation of which mysterious fold learned doctors are not agreed. *Ayayos* says, that should there be daughters or sisters residing with the lady called on, it is done to signify that the visit is meant for them also. Muller's 'Politesse Française' informs us that it is intended to show that the call was made in person. Perhaps, originally, it may have been meant as a proof that the caller was not one of those genteel mendicants who send in their card, and ask to have it back again, for future use, after

they have pocketed their half-a-crown.

As a card may be substituted for a call, calling resolves itself into three degrees of comparison: the superlative—when you call, enter the house, and pay your compliments personally; the comparative—when you drive to your friend's door, and leave your card without quitting your carriage; the positive—when you simply send your card by the hands of a servant. A card is thus a homœopathic call, a call administered in its mildest form; it is the infinitesimal element of calling. The two latter modes are common in Italy, and possibly may have reached us thence. Young single ladies, abroad, are not allowed to have independent cards all to themselves. They take their place on their mamma's family omnibus card, thus:—

Madame et Mademoiselle d'A B C.

One particular class of visits cannot, on the Continent, be neglected or avoided; namely, those of New-Year's-Day. A considerably wide margin (the close of the month) is allowed for paying them; but the sooner they are paid the better. The most respectful New Year's visits—those, for instance, to grand-parents—are made on the eve of the day. To intimate friends, or superiors, at a distance, you must write; to those in the same town or near neighbourhood you must present yourself personally; to all others, whether distant or near, you are expected to send your card by post. It is a troublesome ceremony, but it affords a capital opportunity for reconciling coolnesses and clearing up misunderstandings. 'The obligation,' says Chateaubriand, 'under which you live, of receiving your neighbour on New-Year's-Day, induces you to live on good terms with him during the whole of the rest of the year, and the peace and union of society are thereby maintained.' The theory is amiable; is it borne out by facts?

A young lady cannot pay visits alone; she should be accompanied either by her mother or some other lady who may be regarded as fulfilling that maternal office. If she goes out shopping, or to prayers at

church, she may be simply attended by a female servant; but at public walks, soirées, and balls, the protection of a matron is indispensable.

At visits of circumstance, you will do well to wait till the occasion which brings you is the subject of conversation, before you allude to it. It is difficult, after exciting events in families, both to know exactly which way the wind is blowing, and to divine the exact strength of the breeze. Neither joy nor grief are so completely unmingled as we often suspect them to be.

'Visits of condolence and congratulation,' 'The Habits' tells us, 'must be made about a week after the event. If you are intimate with the person on whom you call, you may ask, in the first case, for admission; if not, it is better only to leave a card, and make your "kind inquiries" of the servant, who is generally primed in what manner to answer them. In visits of congratulation, you should always go in, and be hearty in your congratulations. Visits of condolence are terrible inflictions to both receiver and giver, but they may be made less so by avoiding, as much as is consistent with sympathy, any allusion to the past. The receiver does well to abstain from tears. A lady of my acquaintance, who had lost her husband, was receiving such a visit in her best crape. She wept

profusely for some time upon the best of broad-hemmed cambric handkerchiefs, and then, turning to her visitor, said, 'I am sure you will be glad to hear that Mr. B— has left me most comfortably provided for.'

In a similar spirit, M. Boitard advises, in his '*Manuel Illustré de la Bonne Compagnie*,' 'At a visit after a *lettre de faire part*, you should be able to arrange your countenance as well as your dress.

'After a funeral, be very sorrowful in the presence of an heir who has inherited large property. Speak warmly in praise of the defunct's virtues. You will be rendering assistance to the heir, by playing the hypocrite in his stead.

'But if your friend has lost a relation who did not leave him a single sou, talk of the Opera, the Bal Mabille, the last new novel, without a word about the deceased. You will save your host the trouble of pretending to be overwhelmed by deep affliction.

'In either case, model your features absolutely after the pattern of those of your host, Madame de Bradi says, 'On such occasions, laugh with those who laugh, and mourn with those who mourn; it is not hypocrisy, but goodness of heart.'

We are perfectly willing to allow it to be so.



BACK AND FRONT: A GLANCE AT OURSELVES.

EVERY one of our readers, we should think, be he ever so little studious of his personal appearance, must at least once or twice in the course of his existence have had his eyes directed to his own outward configuration, as reflected in the variously-disposed mirrors of a tailor's shop. He will then perhaps have become acquainted for the first time with numerous aspects of his person long familiar to his friends, but wholly unrealized by himself; with the back of his head, the profile of his face, the depth of his shoulders, and other characteristic points which he had never dreamed of investigating. He will at first, in fact, hardly recognise his own identity; but by degrees, as the whole truth comes before him, will admit that he has now learnt something of himself of which it was well not to remain ignorant. A somewhat analogous effect is produced upon one's mind by the study of those pictures of England, which proceed from the pens of foreign writers, more especially, if not indeed exclusively, French and American writers. Lying in the middle, as it were, between these two opposite reflectors, we may see ourselves posed under almost every possible aspect, and become acquainted with defects of symmetry or awkwardness of gesture wholly unknown to us before. There is indeed this rather important difference between the tailor's mirror and the Frenchman's or American's book. The glass gives a true reflection, and, as far as it goes, a whole one. The pen conveys a likeness too often blurred and distorted, and sometimes only half-finished. But for all that, some broad lines and salient features will generally be recognizable; and even distortions and exaggerations may teach us where our faults lie.

Nathaniel Hawthorne's latest work 'Our Old Home,' and an anonymous French publication entitled 'Etudes sur le Self-Government,' attributed by some people to no less an authority than M. de Persigny,

falling into our hands at about one and the same moment, suggested the above reflections. We propose to contrast, for the amusement of our readers, the French and the American view; for although the one work is almost wholly political, and the other almost wholly social, yet this difference is itself part of the contrast, and affords, indeed, a kind of clue to guide us through the whole comparison.

The attention of both the Frenchman and the American is riveted upon those features of English national life in which their own countries respectively are most deficient. The tone in which these points are discussed may vary to any extent from earnest appreciation down to half-disguised jealousy; but each writer sees most clearly that which his own nation wants. The tone of detraction prevails most strongly in the American; and it is easy to understand the reason. In social and political philosophy the American is a mere child. His country has lived hitherto the irresponsible, buoyant, unthinking life of early youth; nor has ever, till quite lately, been tried with the trials of manhood, or brought to ponder on the serious problems of national existence. Hence that petulant self-confidence, that utter contempt for all beyond the scope of his own experience, which has hitherto been characteristic of the American. The Frenchman, on the contrary, is one of a storm-tossed community, beaten backwards and forwards upon the waves of revolution, tried by almost every vicissitude which can befall states, and possessing, in the national traditions of a thousand years, examples of the good and evil of almost every kind of government or society. He may say, as it were, to the American, I have forgotten more than you have ever known. And hence, among the really cultivated and thoughtful French writers, we find a liberal and Catholic spirit upon all these topics, which has not yet descended on our cousins. Mr. Hawthorne, while he

admits the superiority of the English over his own countrymen in certain respects, cannot abide the idea that it is an absolute superiority. He will have it that it is only the full bloom of a lower civilization as contrasted with the immature development of one intrinsically higher. The English aristocracy, and the English laws of succession, are in his eyes an incubus and a crime; for he has never known what it is to have an aristocracy, and is totally incapable of comprehending its political value. Whereas the author of 'Etudes,' a sadder and a wiser man, knowing what it is to have had, and to have lost, this institution, devotes a whole chapter to prove that liberty cannot last without it. The American chafes in secret at our idea of 'a gentleman;' for the ideal is an exotic in his country, and he cannot, or will not see its excellence. The Frenchman, whose native land was the cradle of chivalry, conscious of no such strangeness, says little or nothing on the subject. But then, in turn, he is never weary of analysing and admiring our political institutions, which to the American are as familiar as the daylight. In a word, to the one our social, and to the other our political condition, is the chief source of attraction, wonder, admiration, and contempt, as the case may be. America regards us with complacent pity, as slowly but surely going down hill. The Frenchman believes in us still as the polar star of constitutional freedom. Mr. Hawthorne says that some day, when we least expect it, there will come a 'terrible crash.' The author of the 'Etudes' thinks that 'la monarchie Anglaise, l'aristocratie Anglaise, les institutions Anglaises sont plus vivaces que jamais;' for that 'elles reposent sur un roc inébranlable, la liberté.'

We must not, however, be understood to mean that Mr. Hawthorne shows himself deficient in kindly feeling towards the 'Old Home,' or incapable of sympathising with much that Englishmen revere. In fact, the very title which he has chosen for his work is a sufficient guarantee that he regards his mother soil with tenderness. But, on the

other hand, there can be no doubt that Mr. Hawthorne has contrived, more fully than any other American writers with whom we are acquainted, to separate England from the English. The former he certainly loved; the latter he regarded evidently with very mixed feelings. He had naturally a fine taste; and, England was the home of the picturesque, both moral and material. The sequestered old village with its ivy-robed church, the feudal hall peering out from its cinctures of elm trees, the grey or yellow cottages with their moss-strewn thatch, and fresh little gardens in front, delighted both his eye and his spirit. An exquisite picture in themselves, they spoke to him of a remote antiquity, of immemorial order, of a sweet and mellow civilization, which soothed him like a summer-day. Our magnificent cathedrals, and the few fine old castles of the middle ages which still remain to us, move his imagination still more. On our cathedrals, indeed, he is especially eloquent. But it is in the spirit of a spectator that he enjoys them, and much as English travellers may enjoy the old castles of the Rhine. He allows, indeed, that "even the aristocracy is a picturesque object; and completely bears out our criticism, in observing that 'a titled and landed aristocracy, if anywise an evil and an encumbrance, is so only to the nation which is doomed to bear it on its shoulders; and an American whose sole relation to it is to admire its picturesque effect upon society, ought to be the last man to quarrel with what affords him so much gratuitous enjoyment.' No doubt a very sensible remark; but a perfect illustration of the purely critical and cosmopolitan spirit in which he views the old home. He finds in it much to gratify his taste, much to stimulate his 'sensibility' but beyond that he will not permit himself to go. Though he praises many of the qualities which make up English character in the aggregate, and loved some Englishmen in particular, he clearly did not like them on the whole. Perhaps he was moved by some instinctive per-

suation of which he was himself unconscious, that the early emigrations to the old states had drained off the cream of English blood. He certainly implies rather than asserts in many places that the English have degenerated within the last two centuries in every capacity. He admits, to be sure, that his countrymen have deteriorated likewise; but they have not lost so much of their original spiritualism as John Bull has. The truth of the matter seems to be, that Mr. Hawthorne rather grudged England to the English. It was too good for them. He would have liked to annex it as a sort of summer lounge, to be to the vast forests, rivers, and prairies of America, what the 'pretty little country place' of some duke or other potentate is to a Chatsworth or a Belvoir.

Much as the French are said to misunderstand the English, it seems to us that Americans, of whom Mr. Hawthorne must be considered to be a very fair type, misunderstand us still more. For instance, in describing the church of Stanton Harcourt, which he saw when inspecting Oxford, Mr. Hawthorne observes, that 'it speaks well for the upright and kindly character of the old family (the Harcourts), that the peasantry, among whom they had lived for ages, did not desecrate their tombs, when it might have been done with impunity.' Why, in what part of England *did* the peasantry desecrate the tombs of any of the old families who had lived among them for ages? Nowhere. Mr. Hawthorne seems to suppose that during the civil wars the same savage feeling towards the aristocracy prevailed in England as a century and a half later prevailed in France. As we all know, there was nothing of the kind. Our English aristocracy had never been oppressors of the people. The Civil War was not a war of classes. The 'people,' that is to say, the peasantry, were *directly* quite uninterested in the struggle. They had nothing to gain, as far as they could then see, by the victory of the Roundheads, to say nothing of the fact that a great number of the

aristocracy belonged to that party. Mr. Hawthorne makes the same mistake which the author of the 'Etudes' imputes to certain of his own countrymen, who 'confound aristocracy with our ancient noblesse, proud, in debt, mendicant, frivolous, and oppressive.'

In the English 'loyalty,' Mr. Hawthorne uneasily suspects something more substantial than he can persuade himself openly to acknowledge. He affects to make merry at the enthusiasm with which the Queen's health was drunk at the Lord Mayor's dinner:—

'To say the truth, the spectacle struck me rather ludicrously, to see this party of stout, middle-aged, and elderly gentlemen, in the fulness of meat and drink, their ample and ruddy faces glistening with wine, perspiration, and enthusiasm, rambling out those strange old stanzas from the very bottom of their hearts and stomachs—which two organs, in the English interior arrangement, lie closer together than in ours. The song seemed to me the rudest old ditty in the world; but I could not wonder at its universal acceptance and indestructible popularity, considering how intently it expresses the national faith and feeling as regards the inevitable righteousness of England, the Almighty's consequent respect and partiality for that redoubtable little island, and His presumed readiness to strengthen its defence against the contumacious wickedness and knavery of all other principalities or republics.'

Yet he is also obliged to add, in justice to his better self:—

'We Americans smile superior, as I did at the Mayor's table; and yet, I fancy, we lose some very agreeable titillations of the heart, in consequence of our proud prerogative of caring no more about our President than for a man of straw, or a stuffed scarecrow straddling in a corn-field.'

Mr. Hawthorne clearly came to scoff, and did not *quite* remain to pray; yet he stood up and shouted out the chorus with the rest of them, thereby earning the approval of his immediate neighbours, and eliciting a nutcracker smile, as he calls it, from the visage of Mr. Serjeant Wilkins.

To the illustration of English character, Mr. Hawthorne devotes some of his most elaborate efforts. He notes the English love of seclusion, as also does the Frenchman; but whereas the latter regards the English 'home' as something quite peculiar to this country, and not to

be looked for outside of it, the American, though forced to confess that his countrymen have not yet succeeded in naturalizing this moral institution in America, will not allow that the materials or capacity are wanting; that would be to concede too much to British egotism, offensive as it is already. 'The separate domains of high stone fence and embowered shrubbery which an Englishman so loves to plant round his abode,' struck Mr. Hawthorne much on his first visit to Leamington. Our French critic philosophises on the point with considerable ingenuity. 'English domestic architecture,' referring to Belgrave Square, 'belongs,' he says, 'to no style, and betrays but a mediocre taste. But if you are not damped by its commonplace exterior, you will be surprised to detect in these simple edifices one of the most remarkable exhibitions of English character. I mean,' he says, '*la possession de soi-même*—self-possession. 'These houses,' he continues, 'very often surrounded by a wall, seem to retire indignantly from the street, which belongs to the whole people. At first,' says he, 'this egotism revolts us. But a little reflection shows it in a different light. The Englishman and his house resemble each other. Each has the same cold and *triste* exterior. But penetrate inside one of these retreats of domestic peace and happiness, and you will be astonished to find how well the art of life is understood there. Be but introduced to this man, stiff and icy as he seems, a change passes over him at once; he becomes the most amiable and hospitable of hosts. Accept, without hesitation, all that he offers you. His politeness is never mere commonplace.' This analogy between the snail and his shell is very clever, and we believe original. Mr. Hawthorne, indeed, has a passage, apropos of old English towns, conceived in a somewhat similar spirit: 'The street is an emblem of England itself. What seems new in it, is chiefly a skilful and fortunate adaptation of what such a people as ourselves would destroy. The new things are based and sup-

ported on sturdy old things, and derive a massive strength from their deep and immemorial foundations, though with such limitations and impediments as only an Englishman could endure.'

The Frenchman's idea of the 'home' will be found in the extract we have given from the passage upon division of property. To perfect that idea, it is clearly necessary, in his opinion, that there should be territorial possession, with some prospect of permanence. Mr. Hawthorne allows that in the present state of human intelligence some such narrow conception of it still remains master of the field. But if America were but true to herself, if she only understood her own capacities, this old-world prejudice would be dissipated like the morning mist. Speaking of Charlecote Hall, he says:—

'It is a most delightful place. And about the house and domain there is a perfection of comfort and domestic taste—an amplitude of convenience which could have been brought about only by the slow ingenuity and labour of many successive generations intent upon adding all possible improvements to the home, where years gone by, and years to come give a sort of permanence to the intangible present. An American is sometimes tempted to fancy that only by this long process can real homes be produced. One man's lifetime is not enough for the accomplishment of such a work of art and nature, almost the greatest merely temporary one that is confided to him: too little, at any rate, yet, perhaps, too long when he is discouraged by the idea that he must make his house warm and delightful for a miscellaneous race of successors, of whom the one thing certain is that his own grandchildren will not be among them.

'But we have not,' says he, 'modified our instincts to the necessities of our new forms of life. A lodging in a wigwam or under a tent has really as many advantages, when we come to know them, as a home beneath the roof-tree of Charlecote Hall. I sometimes apprehend that our institutions may perish before we shall have discovered the most precious of the possibilities which they involve.'

We must say that here, for the first time, Mr. Hawthorne's meaning is obscure to us. That American democracy may perish before English homes become general in Boston or New York, is very likely. But what does Mr. Hawthorne mean by the tent and the wigwam? We have heard much of the dignity of the Red Indian; but then he beats

his squaws. The Arab is said to be an extremely gentlemanly man; but then he steals mares. These are not among the 'lovely and graceful actions' which are imputed to the dwellers in such homes as Charlecote Hall. The 'possibilities' which American institutions do or did involve are not, of course, a return to savage life. They seem to us to involve only an infinite development of the exact *status quo*; a state, that is, in which the domestic independence of individuals is, or was, carried to an extreme which is wholly incompatible with the English idea of home. For instance, an American father of a family does not think of making money for his children. They are to start in life at the point from which he began himself. They are sent back, as it were, to the bottom of the class, to work their own way again to the top. This system operates in two ways. It not only prevents that possession of hereditary property which the Frenchman considers to be an essential of, and even the American a weighty accident in, the complete idea of home; it also severs, at a very early age, that tie which, in England, binds all the children of one household to the old familiar hearth. A young American thus thrown upon the world becomes like the young of brute animals, who cease to recognize their parents as soon as they can shift for themselves, and who forget in a moment the nest or hollow tree in which they were nursed, though retaining all the time an instinctive attachment to the locality. The English idea of the home is radically connected with the feudal idea of the 'house,' a centre, from which all its members radiate, and to which they still belong, even after they have made homes of their own; a sacred *ομφαλος*, to which they all look back with reverence, and round which they love to think of themselves as still revolving. The poorest man in England, with wife and children growing up, as long as he has a father and mother living in the old house of his birth, loves, when he is about to visit them, to say still that he is going home. Hence it is that the French, though

their manners have been inconsistent with carrying out the idea of home, as understood in England, are able to appreciate and sympathise with it more closely than the Americans. They, too, have had their great old houses, whose cadets have gone forth unto the ends of the earth; ever recurring fondly and proudly to the old château deep among the woods of Brittany, or dipping its turrets and buttresses into the blue bosom of the Loire. Perpetual change, progress, transfer, 'circulation,' though they need not destroy the conception of home when it has once taken firm root, are fatal to its early growth, and ruthlessly nip it in the bud.

It is, indeed, a question whether the Englishman does not occasionally push this sentiment to excess; and whether his keen appreciation of the 'home' does not sometimes render him indifferent to the honour and welfare of the State. The author of 'Etudes' deprecates the old classic and modern French idea of the 'State,' preferring the English principle of looking first to the individual. On the whole, we agree with him. But either principle is open to abuse; and there is no peculiar divine aid, that we know of, imparted to Englishmen to save them from abusing theirs. Mr. Hawthorne finds fault with the English for being indifferent, not, indeed, to the calls of patriotism, but to the antiquities and romance of their own country. 'No Englishman,' he says, 'cares about the Tower. No novelist has laid the scenes of fiction in it.' Here he is decidedly wrong; Englishmen *do* care very much about these things; and more than one famous English novelist has turned to good account the romantic history of the Tower. Englishmen, of course, do not rave about these things any more than a man does about the virtues of his father and mother whom he sees daily, but he is not the less under their influence. The French likewise seem to fall into this error. M. Wey, the author of 'Les Anglais chez eux,' observes: 'Ils sont rarement gais, les souvenirs historiques de ce pays; c'est pourquoi, sans doute, la postérité les

oublie de si bon cœur.' His idea is, likewise, that most of our historical memories, as far, at least, as they concern our architectural remains, are connected with assassination: and he quotes, with applause, a question addressed in all simplicity by one of his fellow-travellers to the guide who had shown them over some: 'Quels sont ceux que furent assassinés ici?'

Mr. Hawthorne admired very greatly the English frankness, but could not refrain from insinuating that it sprung from a less refined nature than the American. Our greater outspokenness on the subject of immorality seems to have led him to this conclusion; and to have convinced him, moreover, that the freedom with which we talk denotes a corresponding freedom of conduct.

'The distinction of ranks,' he says, is so marked that the English cottage damsel holds a position somewhat analogous to that of the negro girl in our Southern States. The subject cannot well be discussed in these pages; but I offer it as a serious conviction from what I have been able to observe, that the England of to-day is the unscrupulous old England of Tom Jones and Joseph Andrews, Humphrey Clinker and Roderick Random; and in our refined era, just the same as at that more free-spoken epoch, this singular people has a certain contempt for any fine-strained privacy; any special squeamishness, as they consider it, on the part of an ingenuous youth, only appears to look upon it as a suspicious phenomenon in the masculine character.'

There is nothing in the world so difficult to decide as a question of this nature. Each individual must judge from his own experience; but we think that Mr. Hawthorne was mistaken. Rich young men at the present day are not, perhaps, rejected as suitors either by young ladies or their parents because it is known they have been 'wild.' But less eligible young men would be. Such a reputation is no longer a feather in a man's cap. Society regards the sin, in the abstract, with a tolerably lenient eye, but not the sinner. They choose to shut their eyes to it as long as it is not thrust upon them. But let any particular instance, such a case, for instance, as Arthur Donnithorne's, in 'Adam Bede,' come within the personal observation of an English family, and

the offender would certainly be proscribed.

The author of 'Etudes' appears to think that both American and English morality are higher than French. And he attributes it to what he calls *La recherche de la paternité* which prevails among all the Teutonic races, but is repudiated by the Latin. He considers that the impunity accorded to the seducer by the absence of such a law is more hurtful to public morals than either the exposures which attend affiliation, or the support which it secures to the unchaste. We should rather be disposed to doubt if the law had much effect either way. If the innate delicacy of the woman and the innate generosity of the gentleman are not sufficient to prevent lapses from virtue, no law will do it. This, however, may be allowed to be a moot point. But it is impossible to resist a smile when the last-mentioned French author goes on to attribute to this same law the freedom of English young ladies in company, and the confidence with which they mingle in male society. M. Wey, who wrote some fourteen or fifteen years ago, has a less monstrous but almost equally ludicrous way of accounting for the phenomenon. He says that he derived his ideas from an English friend, to whom he gives the name of Lyonel Banks. Young ladies in England, he says, are so plentiful that they must in a great measure shift for themselves, and catch their own husbands. He describes them as ever busy in the pursuit of this their one vocation. They are the greatest flirts in the universe. The consequence is that the English youth are brought up from infancy to regard them as natural enemies. Wherefore, when the two sexes meet on the promenade, the ladies walk on with heads erect, and use their eyes without stint, though preserving, at the same time, great sweetness of expression; while the men, on the other hand, pass them by with downcast looks and affected indifference to their charms. 'I see how it is,' said M. Wey, to his friend Lyonel, when he heard the explanation. 'Vous êtes, Messieurs, les demoiselles de l'An-

gleterre!' This particular feature of English society of course does not strike an American whose young ladies are more free from supervision than they are even in England. It has been doubted by Americans themselves whether this absolute liberty is not more often abused than Englishmen are aware of. But, at all events, even Mr. Hawthorne himself admits that English girls possess 'a certain charm of half-blossom, and delicately-folded leaves, and tender womanhood, shielded by maidenly reserves, with which somehow or other our American girls often fail to adorn themselves during an appreciable moment.' So that, on the whole, we are fairly entitled to believe that England carries off the palm; and that between the ultra-seclusion and reserve of the French, and the ultra-freedom of the Americans, our own fair flowers exactly hit the happy mean.

We now approach a most delicate and interesting subject—no less than the personal beauty of the English, male and female! On this point the Gaul and the Yankee are wide asunder as the poles. Business first and pleasure afterwards; so let us begin with the men. What says Mr. Hawthorne? To deduce a general conclusion from his somewhat conflicting premises, we should say that his estimate of Englishmen is that they are a manly, vigorous, florid, and rather coarse race of beings; fine animals, but unrefined, and upon whom ornament is as much misplaced as a jewel in a swine's snout. 'If,' says he, 'you make an Englishman smart, you make him a monster: his best aspect is that of ponderous respectability.' We are to presume, of course, that Mr. Hawthorne was comparing Englishmen with Americans; and we may, we think, further take for granted that the Americans who travel in Europe are not the worst specimens of the race. Supposing, then, that these our eyes have gazed upon the average American, we are at a loss to understand the basis of Mr. Hawthorne's sarcasm. If John Bull is 'bulbous, long-bodied, short-legged, heavy-witted, and material,' the American is certainly weedy, lanky, leathery

(it is so easy to call names), and smart even unto swindling. But as regards personal beauty, that is a matter of taste, and we may say of this question that *solvitur ambulando*. Take an Englishman of good birth and education, under fifty years of age, and an average specimen of his class, and place him alongside of the average American, to which would Europe give the apple? About ourselves there is, as Mr. Thackeray says, no doubt at all, but the calmness of profound conviction. We are quite certain that the smoke-dried, sallow, lantern-jawed gentlemen who are bred on the other side of the Atlantic—whose souls wink through their eyes, so to speak, only at the chink of the dollar—are inferior specimens of humanity, less likely to win ladies' love than even the beefy Briton. Let us now turn to the French opinion on the subject,—the French, who have no special reason for flattering us. M. Jules Janin speaks of 'the transcendental beauty of the officers of the Life Guards.' M. Wey says that these young men are specimens of ideal beauty. The author of the 'Etudes' points to the handsome faces and figures of Englishmen no less than of English women, to show the result of English marriages which [people make for themselves, inspired by mutual passion. It would be idle to indulge in any comments of our own on this subject. To quote the quotation which had so powerful an effect on the mind of Dr. Newman, *Securus judicat orbis terrarum*. The world must decide.

Of English ladies Mr. Hawthorne is obliged to admit that their beauty grew on him by degrees. But then he attributes this fact to the gradual deprivation of his own taste, which a residence in England superinduced. He says, that 'he desires above all things to be courteous; but that the soil and climate of England produce feminine beauty as rarely as they do delicate fruit.' He admits that exceptions are numerous, but that these are 'hot-house ameliorations, and always liable to relapse into their original coarseness.' Now for our French critics, the admitted

arbiters of taste in the matters of female beauty. M. Wey says that an assemblage of English girls 'realizes the paradise of Mahomet.' Expressions either more or less favourable are found scattered up and down all the French writers. And now how shall we account for the difference? In the first place, there is no doubt that American women are very pretty, much prettier than French women. In the second place, there is not the same contrast between the American and English styles of beauty as between the English and the French. In the third place, American life, especially in the northern cities, is deficient in many of those elements to the presence of which in English life we owe much of our female attractiveness. All the rural life, the fresh, fragrant simplicity of the country-house, with its dogs, horses, and domestic pets in general; the life which keeps our English girls young and natural to the last, is *caviare* to the American, who admires his women only in the artificial boudoir-life of towns, and the bustle of great hotels. It is rare to meet with an American girl who completely fulfils the Englishman's idea of a 'lady.' The American is unconscious of the want. He has no other standard to judge by. The simplicity of English girls he mistakes for want of refinement. But the Frenchman has the reality of the lady still before him; and a tradition also of a particular kind of lady, which he finds realized in England only. He knows that at the bottom of all that is ladylike—of all that is pretty or beautiful—of all that is sweet and permanently attractive—must be nature. The English girls have a greater share of this than either the French or American, both in their *physique* and their *morale*:—hence the Frenchman's admiration. The American does not know this:—hence his air of superiority.

Before concluding this comparison of the two 'views,' we must notice one other curious observation which Mr. Hawthorne made on English society: that is, that specimens of cheerful and respected old age are much more frequently to be

met with in England than in America. In one passage he confesses himself at a loss to account for the phenomenon; but in another he seems to hit the right nail upon the head, where he says that 'among ourselves, the rush, stir, bustle, and irreverent energy of youth are so preponderant, that the poor forlorn grandsires begin to doubt whether they have a right to breathe in such a world any longer, and so hide their silvery heads in solitude.' We are at once thrown back upon that idea of the 'home' which we have already discussed as one founded upon principles which have never taken root in America. Our old men are the heads of the home, the representatives for the time of the idea. They thus have a position of their own in the world which invests them with a kind of dignity, and is sure, at all events, to secure them respect and reverence.

On the whole we think that the French estimate of England, in spite of certain well-known blunders which no Frenchman is ashamed to confess as soon as he discovers them, is a fairer one than the American. In the latter, indeed, the consanguinity of the two peoples is always perceptible. We are conscious, as we contemplate it, that our critic is one of ourselves in a great measure, and takes as a matter of course much which perplexes the Frenchman. It is, if we may use such an expression, a piece of self-analysis performed by one's double. But the essential difference between the bases of society in the new world and in the old acts as a bar to the full comprehension of English life by an American, more effectively even than the ethical difference between the English and the French. American life is a completely new social product. English and French life have diverged from one original stock; nor is the point of departure far removed. Moreover, as we have said already, America is a self-educated and inexperienced nation, and exposed, of course, to the influence of the same narrow and self-confident views which distinguish self-educated men and very young men. France has

profited by many a severe lesson to be more tolerant and less conceited than either of the other two.

It is certainly most interesting to observe the opposite conclusions to which two such impartial witnesses as an American and a Frenchman are conducted by the contemplation of our English *reÿime*. Mr. Hawthorne asks apropos of an aristocratic wedding which he had witnessed, delighted from an æsthetic point of view with the 'careless and kindly English pride' which distinguished the bridegroom, and with the 'white drapery' and delicate appearance of the bride, whether, after all, it is desirable that this state of things should last. 'Is or is not the system wrong, which gives one married pair so immense a superfluity of luxurious home, and shuts out a million others from any home whatever? One day or another, safe as they deem themselves, and safe as the hereditary temper of the people tends to make them, the gentlemen of England will be compelled to face this question.' Now listen to the Frenchman:—

'Who is it that does not at once see the solid foundation that land (as property) furnishes to political institutions? All we (Frenchmen), too often reduced by the slenderness of our fortunes to selling our paternal heritage, what are we upon the soil of France? Nomades. Our establishments resemble tents which the wind of revolutions or the hand of time carries away, together with the badly-fixed fastenings which serve for their support. The English citizen takes root in the English soil. His *home* [sic in the original]—to make use of the proper word in this hardy but expressive language—constitutes a sacred asylum, where he lives as a man who is free, as one who is a king.'

And again—

'The political tone of mind is by no means a monopoly of the aristocracy. We have had in France, from amongst the genuine bourgeoisie, intelligences of the highest order for the management of public affairs. It is useless to give the names of individuals. With the hand upon the heart, can one conscientiously say that these brilliant individualities, suddenly transformed into political personages, that these barristers, these merchants, these manufacturers, transported by a stroke of destiny to the rudder of the state, have comported themselves as men whose educational bringing up had duly fashioned them for this difficult mission? There are illustrious exceptions to be cited: this professor, that banker, that engineer, has acted and spoken, once in power, as a master of the position; but is it

wise, is it prudent, to count on similar phenomena? Is it not better worth while to have in reserve men who have been fashioned from their youth for the political career, who are prepared for the exercise of government, as others are prepared for the priesthood?

'In France, the first preoccupation of a young man, when he has terminated his studies, is necessarily, with perhaps few exceptions, to make his fortune. I mean by making his fortune, to acquire the means of living and of bringing up a family. This is a task which brings a man to forty years of age; and that, upon condition that he shall have been fortunate and very intelligent. This is the average age at which a political career opens for a Frenchman.

'Take a gentleman in England—gentleman in English does not express the same meaning as the word *gentilhomme* in French—his education is a sort of preparation for political life. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge open to him veritable schools of government. On leaving these great schools, he completes the measure of his information in passing over Europe and America. At twenty-five years of age, he will have returned home; now you find him in a position to present himself at the hustings of an electoral district. Mr. Gladstone, the son of a wealthy merchant of Liverpool, is one of the most remarkable illustrations of this high training and of this early initiation into political life. He is a simple commoner, for whom the Tories and Whigs dispute, and, whom a participation in the great affairs of his country during a quarter of a century, has put in a position, at fifty-two years of age, to fill occupy the most elevated ministerial offices.'

'The secret of these great political fortunes which constitute the fortune of a country, is,—a patrimony.

'Far be it from me to be guilty of the political blasphemy of attributing a specific virtue to the possession of large landed property. They do not make either the qualities or the political *§§* of their possessors. I wish but to remark one thing: they furnish to those whom a political vocation attracts the most efficacious means of preparing for it. Now, in a country where liberty reigns, where representative institutions work regularly, it is the ambition of all superior intelligences, to devote themselves to a political career.'

Which of them ought we to trust? Common sense will tell us that the Frenchman must surpass the American in political knowledge, as much as the man surpasses the boy in knowledge of the world. But as we do not desire to make this article controversial, we will leave our readers to draw the conclusion for themselves.

Of the aristocracy in general, and the monarchy in particular, the author of '*Etudes*' puts the following estimate into an Englishman's mouth.

'My good friend, this aristocracy which seems so odious to you renders me great services every day. It defends my liberty and my property at home. Abroad, under its sheltering protection, when I pronounce the simple words, "*I am an Englishman*," every one respects me." That is equivalent, in all respects, to the famous "*Civis Romanus sum*." Do you know how I pay for it? By honorary distinctions which cost nothing to a man of sense. It is the same thing with our well-beloved Queen; the House of Commons on certain occasions addresses her as it were upon their knees. The Lords obtain almost the same expressions of respect; it is with uncovered head that the Lower House presents itself before the Upper. Learn then to understand that the Queen is an idol; one feeds her upon incense; she follows the *régime* of our aristocracy.

The substantial part of power reverts to her

priests,—that is to say, to her ministers. After all, and at the bottom of things, I am the real power of the state: queen, lords, members of the House of Commons, ministers,—they are all my servitors. My name is Public Opinion. Look at one of these equipages which make your hair bristle with indignation. There is upon the front seat a gentleman clad in a sombre-coloured cloth, with a plain black hat for his entire head-covering. Behind, upon the same level, you perceive a sort of Colossus with gold lace on all the seams of his clothes, a hat with feathers on his head, and the epaulettes of a general upon his shoulders. A child, or a savage would cry out at the sight of this brilliant personage. Here is the master! Now, when you observe our manners and customs, do not act like children and savages.



BLANKTON WEIR.

A Water-side Lyric.

'TIS a queer old pile of timbers, all gnarlèd, rough, and green,
 Both moss-o'-ergrown and weed-covered, and jagged too, I ween;
 'Tis battered and 'tis spattered, all worn and knocked about,
 Beclamped with rusty rivets, and bepatched with timbers stout—
 A tottering, trembling structure, replete with memories dear,
 This weather-beaten barrier, this quaint old Blankton Weir.

Whilst leaning on those withered rails what feelings then come back,
 As I watch the white foam sparkling and note the current's track;
 What crowds of fleeting fancies come dancing through my brain!
 And the good old days of Blankton, I live them o'er again;
 What hopes and fears, gay smiles, sad tears, seem mirrored in the mere,
 Whilst looking on its glassy face by tell-tale Blankton Weir!

I've seen it basking 'neath the rays of summer's glad sunshine,
 And when moonlight's gentle shimmer has traced its faint outline;
 When Nature starts in spring-time awakening into life,
 When bright autumn leaves are falling, and golden corn is rife:
 'Midst the rime and sleet of winter, all through the live-long year,
 I've watched the water rushing through this tide-worn Blankton Weir.

And I mind me of that even, so calm and clear and bright,
 What songs we sang—whose voices rang—that lovely summer night.
 Where are the hearty voices now who trolled those good old lays?
 And where the silvery laughter that rang in bygone days?
 Come back, that night of long ago! Come back, the moonlight clear!
 When hearts beat light, and eyes were bright, about old Blankton Weir.

Was ever indolence so sweet, were ever days so fine,
 As when we lounged in that old punt and played with rod and line?
 'Tis true few fish were caught there, but the good old ale we quaffed,
 As we chatted, too, and smoked there, and idled, dreamed, and laughed:
 Then we thought only of to-day—of morrow had no fear—
 For sorrow scarce had tinged the stream that flowed thro' Blankton Weir.

Those sultry August afternoons, when in our skiff we lay,
 To hear the current murmuring as it slowly sweeps away;
 The plaintive hum of dragon-fly, the old weir's plash and roar,
 Whilst *Someone's* gentle voice too, seems whispering there once more;
 Come back, those days of love and trust, those times of hope and fear,
 When girls were girls, and hearts were hearts, about old Blankton Weir!

Those brilliant sunny mornings when we tumbled out of bed—
 Just hurried on a few rough clothes, and to the river sped—
 There to taste the 'clear keen joyaunce' of sparkling summer morn,
 And to breast the rushing current at early flush of dawn;
 'Tremendous headers' took we in the waters bright and clear,
 And splashed, and dashed, and dived, and swam just off old Blankton Weir.

Then that pleasant picnic-party, when all the girls were there,
 In pretty morning dresses and with freshly braided hair;
 Fair Annie, with the deep-blue eyes, and rosy, laughing Nell,
 Dark Helen, sunny Amy, and the Howard girls as well;
 Ah! Lizzie, 'twas but yesterday—at least 'twould so appear—
 We plighted vows of constancy, not far from Blankton Weir.

Of those light hearts but few remain to mourn the joys they've lost;
 One manly form and brave true heart is o'er the ocean tost:
 Some married are, and chances are that they will think no more
 Of how they joined our chorus there, or helped to pull the oar:
 One gentle voice is hushed for aye—we've lost a voice so dear—
 Who cheered along with even song our path at Blankton Weir.

* * * * *

Amidst the whirl of weary life, its worry and its bore,
 Comes back that well-loved lullaby—the old weir's distant roar:
 It gilds the cloud of daily toil with sunshine's fitful gleams,
 It breaks upon my slumber and I hear it in my dreams:
 Like music of the good old times, it strikes upon my ear—
 If there's an air can banish care, 'tis that of Blankton Weir!

I know the river's rushing, but it rushes not for me,
 And feel the morning blushing, though I am not there to see;
 For younger hearts now live and love where once we used to dwell,
 And others laugh, and dream, and sing, in spots we loved so well:
 Their motto '*Carpe diem*'—'twas ours for many a year—
 As show these rhymes of sunny times about old Blankton Weir.

J. ASHBY STERRY.



There was abundant picnic-party, where all the girls were there
 In pretty morning dresses and with freshly braided hair;
 They danced, with the deep-blue eyes and eyes, laughing Nell,
 Sweet Helen, merry May, and the Howard girls as well;
 Ah! Anne, gone but yesterday—at least 't would so appear—
 The playmate none of constancy, not far from Blanken Weir.

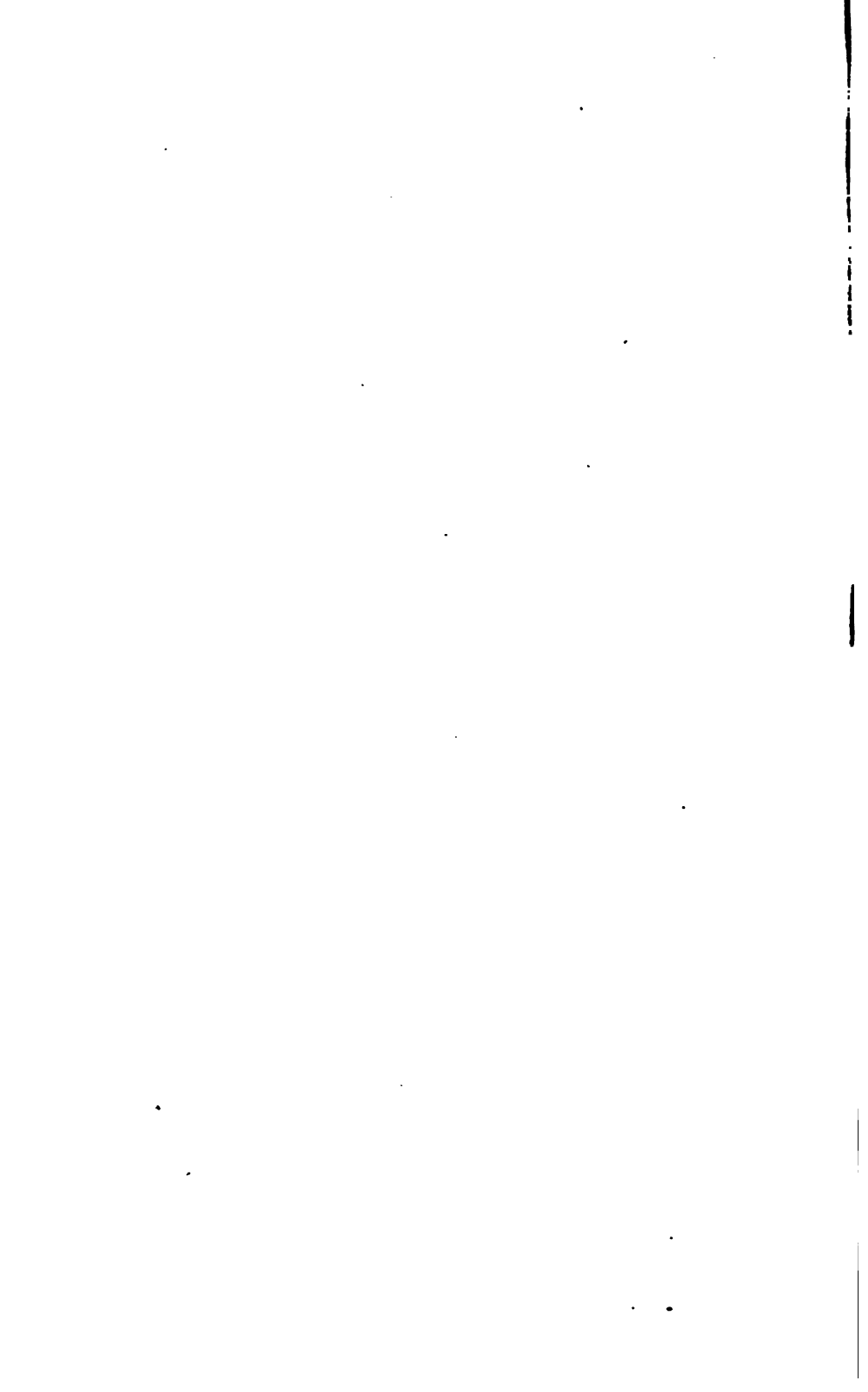
Oh those light heads but few remain to mourn the joys they've had,
 Their kindly hearts and brave true heart is close the ocean bed.
 Those married are, and chances are that they will look to them
 Of how they joined our chaperons there, or helped to pull the net;
 One gentle voice is missed for aye—we've lost a voice so dear—
 Who shared along with even sang our path at Blanken Weir.

Amidst the whirl of weary life, his merry and his love,
 Comes back that well-loved lullaby—the old wife's distant voice.
 It glides the cloud of daily toil with sunshine's fitful gleam,
 It hushes upon my slumber and I hear it in my dream.
 Like music of the good old times, it strikes upon my ear—
 If there's an air can hush me ever, 'tis that of Blanken Weir!

I know the river's rushing, but it rushes not for me,
 And all the morning blanking, though I am not there lower,
 For younger people now live and love where once we used to tread,
 And where we laugh, and dream, and sing, in spots we loved so well;
 Their voices?—they're dead!—Yours ours for many a year—
 Ah! those dear moments of sunny times about old Blanken Weir.

J. JAMES STONE.





AUNT TABITHA'S RAILWAY ADVENTURE.

MY Aunt Tabitha, I am sure, must have been a very lady-like personage before she came so strongly to resemble a gentleman. There are cases where women, who ought to have been married twenty years ago, disgusted with the backwardness of the other sex, strive, as it were, to become their own husbands. Here was one of them. Aunt Tab's voice deepened and grew harsher; her manners became abrupt, and her movements jerking, until ill-natured people sneeringly said she was masculine. A fable was maliciously put into circulation that a blind beggar, in acknowledging alms, had once addressed my relative as 'Sir.' I always looked on these characteristics as simply a natural resemblance on aunt's part to the highest models of her admiration; and pointed to the appearance of a strong, dark down upon the upper lip as striking proof of the force of imagination. But if Aunt Tab secretly admired mankind, she also suspected them, and seemed ever to be in fear of its being discovered that she was not really a married couple in one, and that some suddenly fascinated wooer might become too rough in his attentions. To what lengths this feeling was carried, I only accidentally learned.

'Supposing I saw him gradually stealing upon me from the other end, I could get the bludgeon ready and meet him at the distance,' resolutely said the unmistakeable Tabithan tones.

'But if he should happen to spring upon you from the opposite seat! What should you do then?' asked a voice I recognized as that of my aunt's companion, Mrs. Leeson, a widow of some thirty years' standing, and who, therefore, though in a lesser degree, had her own complaint of neglect against my sex.

'In that case, I should present the dagger in such a way that he would rush upon it.—So!' added my aunt, with a very theatrical accent. 'I shall always keep the point turned a little outwards under my cloak.'

'Couldn't you shoot him quicker?' mildly inquired Mrs. Leeson.

'No: I find it takes time to aim the pistol and pull the trigger,' was the calm reply.

Bludgeons, daggers, and pistols! What, in the name of goodness, did this mean? Who was the fellow alluded to as 'he,' with whom means like these were necessary? I had put my hand on the handle of my aunt's sitting-room door to enter, but the first words I overheard of this mysterious conversation rooted me to the spot.

'Now, then,' resumed my aunt's impressive tones from within, 'we'll practice opening the doors and getting on the footboard, supposing I should be so taken by surprise as not to have time to use any of the weapons. Are you ready?—Stop a minute; this cushion represents the dividing arm of the two seats,' and, in the pause, I could hear some rustling arrangements being made. 'Now then, you must throw yourself suddenly over upon me. Don't mind being a little rough; I dare say the brute won't.—Now!'

Immediately the sounds of a fierce struggle ensued; and, opening the door a little under cover of the noise, I was horrified to see Aunt Tab and Mrs. Leeson closely embraced in one corner of the couch, wrestling together as if for dear life. At last my relative got an arm loose, and making a violent effort, in which uncrinolined morning-ropes were tossed wildly, and ankles revealed in a very undignified way, she flung herself loose from her assailant, and triumphantly leaning over the back of a chair, apparently placed to represent the door spoken of, she whirled herself round it, alighting on the fender, with dishevelled hair and flushed cheeks.

'Oh, you'll do it! No man can hold you faster than I did!' gasped Mrs. Leeson, in a state of utter exhaustion, bringing the locks which should adorn her forehead round from somewhere behind. 'Dear me! the dagger must have stuck out from your belt; it has torn my

dress sadly; and she put her hand out of sight into a large hole at the side.

'Then, I shall shout "Guard! Guard!"' excitedly uttered my aunt; 'and shall struggle on to the next carriage-window,' going along upon her knees as she spoke, 'where they'll support me till the train stops, as it did in the case of that noble young lady. Or,' she went on, hanging upon the couch-arm, 'if it shouldn't, and any accident should happen, I shall perish in my own defence.' Saying this, Aunt Tab tossed up her her arms, and fell lengthways upon the hearth-rug.

'The newspapers would be full of it!' admiringly sighed that old noodle Mrs. Leeson, who had a pin between her teeth, and was slyly gathering up her torn dress.

I saw it all! My aunt, I knew, had received an invitation to go on a visit into Lincolnshire, and she had crazed herself over the newspaper accounts of the dangers to which ladies were exposed on the railway, until, under the foolish encouragement of her companion, she was having recourse to these ridiculous schemes of preservation; and the two were then engaged in the very act of rehearsing railway attacks and defences! My aunt was now gathering herself up from the rug, and I gently reclosed the door. I had not lodged in the same house with my relative very long; but I knew her well enough to understand that any open interference on my part would only make matters worse. But what was to be done? The very next day she was to start for Lincolnshire; and I felt convinced that if she intended travelling with those notions in her head, and weapons of those descriptions in her hands, something not included in the rehearsals would be certain to result. As ill-luck, too, would have it, Cousin Ned, who, like myself, on being sent up to town, had been placed under Aunt Tab's care, went off into Wales holidaying nearly a week ago. I had nobody to consult with, and, of course, could not disclose this preposterous conduct of my respected relative to any stranger.

At dinner that day my aunt appeared with a large red bruise on her forehead, over the right eyebrow; and in the course of talk she asked me, in an accidental way, how persons managed to use flexible life-preservers without hitting themselves instead of their assailants? The red mark was at once explained. My eccentric relative had been practising with a life-preserver, and had given herself a tap by awkwardly manipulating it. I felt a secret delight on observing that Widow Leeson did not seem to have come off scot-free; she was walking decidedly lame of one leg, and there were faint traces of discolouration near one eye. She said she had knocked herself against a door; and stared very curiously at me when I replied, it was a good job it was not a railway-carriage door,—they were so thick and hard, I added, by way of explanation. In the course of that evening, during my aunt and Mrs. Leeson's absence, making some purchases connected with the morrow's journey, I contrived to penetrate into their rooms; and, lo! on the dressing-table in Aunt Tab's chamber I found an old-fashioned dagger (with an ugly blade at the least eight inches long), a whale-bone-connected and lead-knobbed life-preserver, and a six-barrelled Colt's revolver! I recognized each one of the murderous implements at a glance. My cousin Ned, who had gone demented on the Volunteer question, had constituted his bedroom a horrible armoury of all kinds of weapons, offensive and defensive. The instruments before me I knew formed part of his awful stores, and my aunt must have helped herself to them since he left home. Upon closer examination of the pistol, I found that no less than four barrels were loaded, and that caps were ready placed on all the nipples! At some personal risk, for I don't much understand six-barrelled revolvers, I managed to get one charge out, and felt a sensible motion among my hair at sight of the three balls which it had included. It was the same with the other loaded barrels, making twelve bullets in all; and I breathed much

freer when I had extracted the last, and substituted a very light paper wadding in each case.

Upon the return of the two ladies from shopping, they shut themselves up in their own sitting-room, and, from the singular noises which were to be heard, I felt satisfied more rehearsals were in progress. Mrs. Leeson could scarcely limp in to supper; and my aunt's rather withered arms showed several patches of colour, as if from rough grasping. During that night's uneasy slumbers, I was shot in railway carriages two or three hundred times, and was so repeatedly stabbed with daggers, and furiously beaten with life-preservers, that I was quite sore when I finally awoke. I rose fully determined to accompany Aunt Tab on this railway excursion, taking a ticket by the same train, unknown to her, so as to be at hand in case of any emergency. She had an unusual air of determination on her strongly-marked features when I met her that morning on the stairs, and looked like a woman bent on heroic deeds. Mrs. Leeson's attendance made it unnecessary I should offer my services by way of escort to the railway, and I took an impressive farewell, as if going, as usual, into the City. But the mysterious conversation betwixt the two at the breakfast-table had only confirmed my resolution; and, instead of seeking the other side of Temple Bar, I hurried to the King's Cross railway-station, where, ensconcing myself behind a pillar of the piazza, I awaited the arrival of my aunt's cab. Vehicles of all kinds came and went, bells rung for numberless trains, porters gave way to momentary fits of madness, and it was very weary waiting; but I stuck to my post. Had she discovered my tampering with the pistol, and, reloading it, accidentally shot herself?—or, failing that, had she by some mishap stabbed Mrs. Leeson on the road, and the conveyance necessarily diverged to one of the hospitals? In that case, I had wasted the cost of a second-class ticket to Peterborough, having already procured it, so as to save time. No: at length, within three or four minutes

of the time for the train starting, my attention was attracted by the stentorian voice of a cabby.

'Mak' it a shillin', mum, an' I'll drive you all the way to Colney 'atch, which 'I'll save railway fare, he was shouting after a couple of ladies. 'But, mebbe, you're goin' down to shoot upo' the moors, an' mean gettin' into close quarters wi' a pistol to mak' sure o' yer aim.'

Mrs. Leeson turned and shook an angry fist at him; but my aunt, who was the other lady, stalked on unheeding, like one consciously marching to a noble doom.

'It's a very nice thing, ain't it?' added the cabby, addressing the group which instantly gathered about him, 'to ha' a life-preserver lifted to you be a woman, becous you ax for a hextra sixpence, for havin' to go out o' yer road? An' I see'd she's got a pistol as big as a gun inside o' her muff. Look out in the papers to-morrer, for a murder on this heer line, sumwheer' atween this an' Colney!'

This was a pretty beginning, I thought, as I rushed away to gain the platform while my aunt was procuring her ticket. Hiding behind other people in the vicinity of the book-stand, I watched the two go to a carriage where Aunt Tab secured a seat by placing something upon it,—for anything I could tell, the six-barrelled revolver; and then, whilst she and Mrs. Leeson went towards the guard's van, to look after the luggage (which had been sent down before), I ran and leaped into a second-class compartment of the same carriage my relative had selected, nestling myself away out of sight in the corner. By-and-by, the bell rang, doors were slammed, and the train slowly got into motion, when I had a glimpse of Mrs. Leeson apparently sliding off into the rear while throwing encouraging last kisses to my aunt. I was in hopes, as only a very few minutes had elapsed, she might be in time to have another meeting with the prophetic cabman as she retired from the station. It was set down as a fast train, but its speed seemed very slow to me as I sat in the otherwise empty compartment, waiting in nerv-

ous apprehension for some mishap. I listened fearfully, half-expecting a pistol-shot every minute. But all went quietly, and, at last, when we reached the market-gardening districts, I got to amusing myself by mentally tying up the acres of onions on each side of the line into long strings ready for the retail market. We arrived safely at Huntingdon, and there the train slackened and almost came to a pause for a moment, while the guard leaped out and ran along the platform for some purpose, but without actually stopping we instantly got up speed again. Just, however, as the train was leaving the station, a man's red face, with the hat nearly falling off behind, presented itself with an agonised expression at my carriage window, the man struggling to force himself through the aperture.

'Help me in, help ——!' he gasped, sticking fast half-way. Though much startled, I managed to get my arms under his broad shoulders.

'You madman! you'll be killed!' exclaimed the guard, who was now running back the other way to leap into his van. 'What must you get out of the other carriage for?' and the official angrily gave the gentleman a push by the legs which, in forcing him through one window nearly sent me reeling out by the other. 'I shall summons you, sir!'

'I don't care! I'm not mad; but she in the next carriage is,' panted my puffing companion. 'Don't say a word,' he added, facing round to the guard; 'I'll give you half a crown at the next station.'

'She? A lady, sir! The one in the next compartment? I'll inquire into it when we stop,' significantly answered the guard; and the engineer having, in answer to a signal from his whistle, slackened the rising speed again, the speaker leaped down, and hurried to regain his van.

'I'll make it five shillings, guard, if you'll get my stick from her!' excitedly shouted the red-faced man. 'Oh, dear!' he said, turning to me, and rearranging his ruffled dress, 'who will travel by railway, I say?'

'What is the matter?' I very ap-

prehensively inquired, for I well knew the lady in the next compartment must be my Aunt Tab.

'Watch smashed, I know, for I felt the glass go as I tumbled in,' he remarked, pulling out a dilapidated watch. 'But, thank goodness, I'm safe!' and he gasped again. 'Catch me in a first-class any more! I'll go third in future as long as I live. No man's safe, sir; not with a woman old enough to be his own grandmother.'

'Sit down and compose yourself; you've had rather a narrow escape,' I faltered, more and more convinced my aunt was at the bottom of it.

'Escape! I should have had a bullet in me, sir, if I hadn't bolted. She's as mad as a hare; I could see it in her eyes,' and he dropped exhausted on the seat. 'Talk about Banting's system? This beats Banting hollow. I've lost pounds and pounds since we left London.' Removing his hat, he vigorously mopped his face and head with his handkerchief. 'I'm all in a vapour bath at this minute.' He was rather a fat man, well-dressed, having the look of a gentleman farmer.

'I think you mentioned a lady, sir,' I hypocritically inquired. 'Nothing serious has happened to her, I hope?'

'To her! Let me get my breath, and I'll tell you,' he panted, fanning himself with the handkerchief. 'We'd left town about ten minutes, and I saw she was watching me very queerly;—there were only ourselves in the carriage, you understand; well, to make friends with her, I just offered her my newspaper. You may believe me or not, but she deliberately came on, like this, and struck at me with a loaded life-preserver! Then she said something I did not catch, and pulled out a bowie-knife. It's true, sir, as true as I sit here. I believe she's a mad woman from the backwoods of America,' he added, looking into the bottom of his hat before replacing it.

'Was that all?' I ventured to ask, glad that things were not worse. 'I thought you alluded to a stick?'

'That all, young man! By Jove, if it had been you, I fancy you'd have thought it was enough. All?'

he repeated in a hurried manner. 'I had to sit in the corner as if my life was not my own, with a maniac glaring at me.'

'Yes, but the stick?'

'The stick? Why, I happened to let it drop on the carriage-bottom just as we got into the last station.—Whereabouts are we, for I don't know?' and he gazed helplessly out of window. 'Huntingdon, is it? It slipped out o' my fingers, the stick did, and I was stooping to pick it up,—yards away from her, when she screamed out, "Let it be!" and drew a pistol, sir; a revolver with eight or ten barrels. It's true, upon my honour! I thought the train was stopping, but I'd have jumped out of it, if we'd been on a viaduct, for I'm sure she's raving.'

'There have been so many cases lately of ladies assaulted in railway carriages, that perhaps she—' I was simply intending to say that perhaps my aunt was not an escaped lunatic, but had armed herself under that mistaken fear, but I was stopped.

'Good heavens! Is that the way you look at it?' exclaimed my companion, rising horror-stricken from his seat. 'I assure you I never touched the lady; I never was within a yard of her, till I had to brush past. You don't believe it, I see! I'm a married man, and have five children at home. Is it likely—is it reasonable? My bankers will tell you I am respectable, sir. I never put a finger on her, and nobody would do, for she's as ugly as sin. My soul! To think of such a charge as this! She's seventy years of age, sir. Is it likely?'

'She is not fifty yet, sir,' I stammered out.

'But I didn't touch her. I'll swear it! Interfere with a woman armed in that way,—is it reasonable to think it?' he again pleaded. 'But,' he quickly went on, 'who knows what lies she'll tell the guard? And my name's on the stick in full,—it's a presentation stick. Oh dear!' he groaned, tumbling back on the seat.

'I suppose, from what the guard said, he'll ask the lady; but I don't think you need be afraid,' I remarked soothingly.

'After this row in the papers, the magistrates would commit a saint; and there are lots o' folks who'd believe it against a new-born babe. Let me get out! I may as well be killed as disgraced. What would my wife say? I should never have another hour's peace. Let me go. I have a bit of luggage, but anybody may have that—you may! But I swear I never touched her; an' if it's the last word I say, I vow it's true.'

He had become so excited, that I won't say he would not have left the carriage instant, if I would have allowed him. I was obliged to confess that I knew the lady, and that she was very eccentric, but I assured him she would never make any such charge as he apprehended. After some time, I succeeded in quieting the gentleman a little, and in the intervals of wiping profuse perspiration from his face, head, and neck, he repeatedly intimated that if I would but recover for him his stick, his house, his lands, the balance at his banker's, and nearly everything that was his, should be at my disposal whenever I chose to visit the neighbourhood of Gainsborough, where, it seemed, he resided.

'I've seen somewhere, it's forty shillings for getting into a carriage while the train's moving,' said my companion. 'I'll give the guard two pounds willingly, and end it,' he said, pulling out his purse to be ready, for the train was stopping for collection of tickets at Peterborough. 'By jingo, there it goes! She's finished somebody!' and the money rattled to the bottom of the carriage, as I leaped to my feet, for the sharp crack of a pistol was heard from the adjoining compartment. All was instantly commotion. The train stopped, and every window was crowded with heads; the women shrieked, and the men shouted. I opened our door, for I was horrified to see a man in railway uniform stretched on the ticket platform.

'Is he a ticket collector? I thought he was a ruffian!' uttered my aunt's rough and now agonised tones, as she leaned out of the next window, with the revolver in her hand. Then, a long, loud scream

escaping from her, she loosed the deadly weapon, which rattled down among the wheels, and closing her eyes, she grew very pale, and subsided within in a swoon.

A number of us hurried to the man in the railway uniform, who still lay on the platform quite motionless. Upon raising him, he was seen to be wounded on the upper part of the forehead. A rivulet of blood trickled down, and the front locks of hair were singed and frizzled. I believed, for the moment, that my aunt had reloaded the pistol, and startling visions of trials for murder flitted before my eyes. But the man almost instantly rallied, and a surgeon, who was among the passengers, pronounced that the wound was only a skin-graze from the wadding. The collector, in answer to the fifty and one inquiries made at once, explained that as the train was stopping, he put his hand on the carriage door to ask for the lady's ticket, when she instantly lifted her arm and shot him! Aunt Tab, amidst all the hurly-burly which prevailed, was lifted out of the carriage, and carried down to the station-master's room, fortunately remaining unconscious the while. I got my Gainsborough friend (who in the interval had contrived to secure his stick) to accompany me to the head official, and relate what he had observed of the lady's demeanour, urging this in corroboration of my own account of the craze my aunt had been encouraged in by that ridiculous Mrs. Leeson.

From my unlucky relative's own story, when she had a little come round, it appeared that she had been lying back in the carriage, with her eyes shut, ruminating on the narrow escape she had had from unheard-of peril by the forced flight

of a cowardly assailant at Huntingdon, and as the train slackened for Peterborough, she opened her eyes to find a man's face at the window, whereupon she raised the pistol, and pulled the trigger instantly. It was very fortunate for the man that I had extracted the original charge, and as no bullets were found in the other barrels, the charges of which were at once drawn, I represented that my aunt's only object was to raise an alarm. The wounded man, however, intimated that it was not part of his ordinary duties to be shot at by lady passengers even with blank cartridge; and my aunt, overjoyed to see him alive, wished to present to him her *porte-monnaie*. I took care that he was handsomely compensated; and, indeed, we parted on such a friendly footing, that, winking shrewdly from underneath a great patch of sticking-plaster, he said he would not mind being shot at again upon the same terms. After some two hours' delay, during which time my aunt was examined mentally by three local doctors, it was graciously decided not to call in magisterial interference, on the condition that I at once conveyed my relative back to London, and pledged myself to place her under proper medical control.

I and the crushed lady accordingly returned to town by the next up-train, in a state of mind on her part which I shall not attempt to describe. She has not paid the visit into Lincolnshire, and I do not expect she ever will. Aunt Tab has never asked for any explanation of how I came to be so opportunely at hand at Peterborough, but most likely she learned it all from Mrs. Leeson, with whom I held a boisterous conversation immediately after she had recovered the surprise of my aunt's unexpected return.



THE SULTAN'S CHOICE.

An Anagram.

[The italicised words, in the last line of the last stanza, give the name of a world-famous novel. This will be given in next Number.]

I.

A SWARTHY bearded Sultan sought
To purchase with his gold
A Persian slave; nor lean, nor fat,
Tall, short, dark, fair, nor old.

II.

But just *perfection*, so he said,
And still he fault would find;
Rejecting beauties by the score,
Not one *quite* to his mind.

III.

At last a knowing dealer brought
Six fair Circassian maids:
The first His Highness swore too dark,
Black as the Queen of Spades!

IV.

The second slave had curls of gold,
And ruby-tinted cheeks;
But oh, so thin! the Sultan vowed
She'd fasted for six weeks!

V.

The third too short, the fourth too tall,
The fifth *was* passing fair;
But—'growing old,' quoth Mahommed,
And 'something scant of hair!'

VI.

The wary dealer winked his eye,
An artful trick he knew;
And thus he spoke as forth he brought
The sixth slave unto view:

VII.

'Great Brother of the Sun and Moon!'
(Here turned the slave about),
'I rather reckon this here "lot"
Is something out-and-out.'

VIII.

The Sultan's choice at once was made,
No longer in a fix—
'Bowstring those five brown hideous ghouls,
And *KEEP THE PEARL OF VI.*'

ASTLEY H. BALDWIN.

A LONG-VACATION SKETCH IN SCOTLAND.

A LOFTY mountain growing to the sky,
 Blue slopes uprising heather-clad between,
 A bluer lake beneath, on whose smooth breast
 A little boat—and three are in the boat.

For young Adonis, pride of Oxford he,
 And Arthur, stanchest of Northumbria's sons,
 And he, that other, whose clean-carven front
 Is clad with raven curls, whose early soul
 Was wed to rhyme at Harrow-on-the-Hill—
 Forgetful of the supper and the song,
 The cheer for hospitable comrade gown'd,
 The brimming 'foamy grape of Eastern France,'
 And all the swift joys of the flying terms:
 Forgetful of the gay metropolis,
 The airy Park, and fashionable 'Row,'
 The formal dinner or the brilliant ball;
 Or that whatever in their own sweet home
 Brings chiefest comfort, living in all ease;
 Forgetful of the summer of the south—
 Have sought a spot far from the busy hum
 To thrud th' intricate mazes of the law,
 To father thoughts on Virgil—all unmeant,
 Or read the tale that men call History,
 And meet at last the dread examiner.

Not theirs all day to float upon the lake,
 Rowing by turns, and sailing with the breeze,
 Or snaring to their death the finny race;
 One happy hour of golden afternoon,
 One little while from ev'ning snatch'd is all;
 For work they must, though work be e'er so dull,
 To pluck a little honour from the schools,
 To win a little envy from their fellows—
 A momentary fame while fame is cheap—
 Ere, lost upon the broad sea of the world,
 Each for himself must struggle on toward fame.

I. Z.



BADEN-BADEN.

GOING to Baden and going to the Bad are by very many persons considered synonymous. Certainly society is mixed and experiences manifold, and the entire place is, to a considerable extent, pleasant but wrong. The world has only two capitals, it has been remarked, its winter capital which is Paris, and the summer capital which is Baden. Yes, I think she has some pretensions to that often disputed title, 'The Queen of the Watering Places;' and even when the gambling element is eliminated she will be no disrowned queen. I speak of her as she is at present, without discussing eventualities. I like in Baden, that centre of activity and that circle of repose, the life of the watering-place and the solitude of the Black Forest. I like the sharp contrast of the highest cultivation and artificiality of the age, with the indigenous habits, manners, and garb of the primitive people, who retain the ways and modes of two hundred years ago. I like those ancient stories of the Vehmgericht and the Virgin's kiss, and the modern narratives of daily gossip and adventure. Many of my readers, I am sure, are numbered among the fifty thousand tourists who visit Baden every year, and if sufficiently endowed with health and wealth must have enjoyed it hugely. Among the fifty thousand are sovereigns who lay aside their crowns and cares, and wily statesmen who arrange diplomatic meetings; the artist who intends to sketch, and the man of letters who meditates his novel. But the waiter will bring you round every day at dinner the *Bade Blatt Amiliche Fremden Liste*, where you will find your own honoured name in print, probably with disguised spelling, and those of your contemporaries. After your arrival, if you happen to possess a well-regulated mind, or rather any mind at all, you will endeavour to arrange your impressions in an orderly manner. You will like to know something of this Grand Duchy, which is really a kingdom of considerable size and its Zähringen line of princes as ancient and illustrious as any of their compeers. You will surely traverse those wide dominions, northwards as far as romantic Heidelberg, and southwards to fair Constance. But you will not do this until you have wandered much by the shady side of the Oos, once the slender boundary against France, and much in the region of the Oosgan. Then you have to examine the Baden lions, unless

you are a man of original frame of mind and prefer to take it all for granted. There are positively Baths of Caracalla, but these resolve themselves into an unimportant fragment of old thermae built by the Emperor. There is the Old Castle and the New Castle, and a Devil's Pulpit, and an old castle of Eberstein, and a new castle of Eberstein, and churches and chapels, and hills, and lakes, and picturesque ruins. The guide-books will give you a *catalogue raisonné* of all this. They are by no means to be despised in their way—not even in the guide-book literature, which often gives you curious authentic details to be sought in vain in larger works, but you will always be falling back on Baden itself, to the books and papers at Marx's and the numerous resources of the Conversation House. Generally speaking, one travels from Paris to Baden by way of Strasbourg. At Epemay, understanding that it was the proper thing, I called for champagne, 'the foaming grape of eastern France,' and partook of the only champagne, or rather I should say, vile gooseberry, which ever cost me a headache. The bridge over the Rhine is soon crossed, and then everything becomes German. I say this deliberately, in opposition to the French writers, who maintain that everything continues French. It is, however, to be conceded that French is the ordinary language of the place. Baden-Baden, according to one of these writers, is only a *Pré Catelan*, of which the Black Forest is the *Bois de Boulogne*. This is French sententiousness, you understand, one of those short jerky sentences in which the *feuilletonistes* so greatly delight. It alludes to the days when the *Pré Catelan* was something better than a child's dancing-ground on Sundays and fête-days. The picturesque, they complain, is all utilized; each savage gorge has its café, there are fancy bridges over the precipices and elegant seats in front of the cascades. Now all this is pure cockneyism, and for my part I wonder why the cockneyism of Paris, as it is more flagrant, is not also more celebrated than the cockneyism of London. I imagine that this ingenious writer took a voiture for an hour to go into the forest, and on his return jotted down his impressions after the fashion of the celebrated Count Smorltork. Any one who has spent any time in the forest will contradict this. The forest is, at times, wild and savage in the extreme. Whence

its name of Black is not quite clear, but certainly some of its deep tarns are black enough, and almost black are the very dark green pines, and so black is the Hallenthal, that Marshal Villars drew back and refused to enter the gloomy gorge. In the grounds of the Prince of Faustenbergs castle is the principal source of the Danube, which rises in the Black Forest and emerges in the Black Sea. You are surprised to see the tiny rivulet murmuring over its pebbly bed, through the green grass. But the Black Forest is a wide and scattered territory with some hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, with picturesque villages and towns, with various vast flat plains and treeless hills. Many of the plains were formerly dense forests peopled by hunters and miners, not to say bandits. Those vast rafts, which form the most picturesque feature of Rhine navigation, are generally the timber of the Black Forest. 'That's a Dutchman' is the common exclamation of the native when he sees a fine tree. The meaning is this: the pines felled on the mountain sides lie in the declivity of the ravines, till the torrents from the melting mountain snows sweep them into the neighbouring river which transfers them to the Rhine. The wood intended for ship-building is carried down as far as Dordrecht, and then the canny Dutch keep the best before they transfer the remainder to England, Spain, and Portugal. The story of the 'many-fountained Ida' is evermore repeated on the mountains of the Black Forest.

'They came, they cut away my tallest pines.'

You will probably traverse the Black Forest post, with Baden postillions. Very picturesque is their appearance; a trumpet slung across their shoulders, with which they stir up their horses to the tune of old mountain airs, a bright yellow waistcoat, white buck-skin breeches, and jack-boots. Very picturesque also is the attire of the Baden peasants, especially on the Sunday, when waistcoats and breeches are braided and laced all over; the long coat is that of the seventeenth century, and the women's long tresses of hair gathered up into a black ribbon, hang almost down to their ankles. You often meet the peasants carrying at their waists little bags full of fine straw, and as they walk plaiting the straw hats, which are imported into various countries. The manufacture of cheap wooden clocks is also a very common source of employment in the Forest. These are everywhere known, and form a considerable source of business to the Badois. For-

merly the *liqueur kirchweasser* was made out of the wild cherries of the country, but I imagine that this has ceased to be a specialty. It is very interesting, while wandering through the country, to observe the frequent crosses set up by the pious mountaineers in the forest path. No amount of Protestantism can enable me to see any objection in these. There is a beautiful passage on this subject in poor Hawthorne's *Romance of Monte Beni*, that most faithful transcript of Rome and Italian life. 'Whatever may be the iniquities of the Papal system, it was a wise and lovely sentiment that set up the frequent shrine and cross along the roadside. No wayfarer, bent on whatever worldly errand, can fail to be reminded at every mile or two, that this is not the business which most concerns him. The pleasure-seeker is silently admonished to look heavenward for a joy infinitely greater than he now possesses. The wretch in temptation beholds the cross, and is warned that, if he yield, the Saviour's agony for his sake will have been endured in vain. The stubborn criminal, whose heart has long been like a stone, feels it throb anew with dread and hope; and our poor Donatello, as he went kneeling from shrine to cross and from cross to shrine, doubtless found an efficacy in these symbols that helped him towards a higher penitence.'

But let us copy the programme for the month of July, of this year of grace, 1864, commencing this very day, July the 12th.

Le 12. Musique militaire à la promenade et grand concert à la chapelle de Mannheim.

Le 13. Musique d'orchestre et bal.

Le 14. Représentation du *Déserteur* et de *De par le Roi*.

Le 16. Musique d'orchestre.

Le 17. Musique militaire à 3 heures, solistes le soir.

Le 18. Représentation de *Richard Cœur-de-Lion*, et de *De par le Roi*.

Le 19. Musique militaire et bal.

Le 20. Musique d'orchestre.

Le 21. Musique Prussienne et bal.

Le 22. Musique militaire: représentation des *Noëes de Jeannette*, des *Papilotes* de M. Benoit, et de *La Fleur de Lotus*.

Le 23. Musique d'orchestre.

Le 24. Musique militaire de Grenadiers.

Le 25. Représentation de *Zampa*, et de *Volage et Jaloux*.

Le 26 et 28. Musique militaire et bal.

Le 29. Représentation de *Zampa*, et de *Volage et Jaloux*.

Le 31. Musique militaire à 3 heures, solistes le soir.

This programme will give a good idea of the general nature of such programmes. The great balls of the season were, some time since, fixed for the 16th and 30th of August, the races for the 1st, 3rd, and 5th of September, and the steeple-chase for the 7th of September. I think this will give a tolerably accurate idea of the nature of the public amusements.

The weather was so capricious this season that the Baden belles were long in settling whether it was hot or cold, whether summer or autumn. The pretty summer dresses of material from Mexico and Chambéry excited quite a furore on the Lichtensal promenades, when the month of July at last settled the question in the affirmative. The wonder is, where all the visitors can be stowed away. The explanation is that at Baden innkeeping is the principal industrial pursuit, and the natives, who amply enjoy themselves out of the season in their ample rooms, get into the queerest little places during the season, in the garret or down in the cellar, giving up to strangers the cherished parlour and the most sacred chambers. I am told that all this is looked upon quite in the light of a liberal profession, and that graduates of Tübingen and Heidelberg will in the winter adopt the black coat and white tie of the waiter. But the very centre of all Baden life is the beautiful little villa that belongs to the great M. Benazet himself. It is situated a few steps from the Park and Conversation House, on a well-timbered eminence commanding a bird's view of the whole town, and of the surrounding hills. Certainly both the Benazets, père and fils, have shown a wonderful amount of taste and energy in all they have done. I have pleasure in admitting this at the outset, as it is not the general intention of this article to speak favourably of these gentry. Some of the noble apartments which they have built and adorned, might vie with those of St. Cloud and the Tuileries. They have, I believe, always shown an hospitality to men of arts and letters, which shows taste and discernment. Their opera-house is very noble, and has witnessed its operatic triumphs. Gounod produced for it an unedited opera, in which Madame Miolan-Carvalho was to be *prima donna*. A telegraphic correspondence has been published between M. Benazet and Signor Tamberlik. It is rarely that an Englishman writes so much politeness at a telegraph or railway station :

M. Benazet to M. Tamberlik.—You are the prince of tenors. Baden wants you for a concert on the 20th of August. The terms are left in blank, you shall fill them up.

M. Tamberlik to M. Benazet.—I am not the prince of tenors, which does not prevent you from being a true *Mæcenas*. The pleasure and honour of singing in your regal saloon would be reward enough. Other engagements deprive me of that honour: pity me.

I am not sure that there is not a touch of insincerity in M. Tamberlik's despatch. I may mention that there is a curious superstition that one need not pay to go to the dramatic or operatic performances, but that M. Benazet is sure to send invitations. M. Benazet may have a liberal free list, but as a rule, one pays, and rather highly.

Alfred de Musset, that fertile genius, has his strain respecting Baden :

'Les dames de Paris savent par la gazette
Que l'air de Bade est noble et parfaitement sain.
Comme on va chez Herbault faire un peu de
toilette,
On fait de la santé là-bas; c'est une emplette:
Des roses au visage et de la neige au sein,
Ce qui n'est défendu par aucun médecin.'

A man once wrote a will in which he expressed his wish in reference to his interment: 'I desire to be buried in the Catholic cemetery of Baden, to find the repose of death on that spot where in my lifetime I tasted calm and forgot my evils.' And assuredly to a man of lotus-eating disposition, Baden will present many attractions if he can conquer the prevalent temptation to gaming. It is a very happy place for a mere holiday existence. To get up when you like, or not get up; take your coffee and write your letters, and skim through your books, and receive an intimate visitor or two *en déshabillé*; or if you wish to carry idleness to the height of idleness, don't read, don't write, don't receive, but fold your hands and sit in vacant quiescent calm—and even this for a change is very delightful now and then. Nobody goes out in the morning. It rather appears the proper thing to stay at home. If you choose to go out, you may encounter a solitary pedestrian now and then in the woods, and of course there are always three or four rooms pretty full of gamblers in M. Benazet's *interiora loci*. The afternoon is the grand time for the promenade. And what a wonderful promenade that is—as wonderful, if not more so, than the Prado, Hyde Park, or Avenue de l'Impératrice. What a wonderful display of De Musset's 'des

roses au visage et de la neige au sein,' although I fear that both the white and red are materially indebted to artificial aid. Had I a peacock's pen, had I the envied power of the editor of 'Le Follet,' I should like to describe that summer sea of gauze, those toilets of Eastern splendour and oftentimes of startling originality, such as worn by the damsels who attended Lalla Rookh in the Valley of Cashmere, those twinkling points of light, illumination of all gems, which make the Lichtensal promenade such a wondrous display of jewellery, the mob of kings and princes, who have all the happiness and none of the troubles of an incognito.

Amid the gorgeous company my countrymen and countrywomen look, I must confess it, a little seedy. The fact is that they form a minority, sometimes quite an insignificant minority, at Baden. And as a quiet man, a man who never stakes a napoleon on the cards or the marble ball, I certainly feel a sense of treasure-trove in coolly taking possession of all the good things that here invite my acceptance. A friend of mine who hates humbug,' probably because he possesses neither the pretence or the reality of virtue, denounces my humbug in partaking of the disadvantages of a system of which I disapprove. 'You have been walking in Benazet's grounds, and listening to his music, and lounging on his sofas, and reading his "Galignani," and yet you attack this Benazet, and as you are one of those fellows who can't go quietly about these watering-places or anywhere else but must always be using pen and ink, you will probably print your revilings.' Now this is a sort of argument which the fast men often bring against the quiet men, but which contains a fallacy which is easily exposed. There are a great many matters in which a man asks no questions for conscience sake. But one might put and ask questions here. If I had requested M. Benazet to be so good as to take all this trouble for me, the case would be very different. I should certainly make no request. I accept a chair and a newspaper from Benazet, without thinking of his gambling apparatus, just as I should take a pair of boots from my shoemaker without inquiring whether he was happy in his conjugal relations, or take a ride in a voiture without interrogating the voiturier about Renan. And I have no doubt that I have really paid for my seat and paper. Who helped to swell the sum total of my bill at the Victoria? It adds every day some francs to what I give the landlord, and some sous to what I give the waiter. I wholly

deny my sense of obligation. I retain my animosity to this Benazet. I will take out my note-book and pencil something against him, even if I rest my paper on his table and write it underneath his roof.

In fact all this profuse magnificence is derived from the profits of the banks, and, as a speculation, finds itself well repaid. At all the gaming-places it is the losses of the small players that make the profits of the bank. A Garcia who plays largely has been known to win his hundred thousand pounds; but as a matter of course, to use an expression of Juvenal's, those who have nothing lose that nothing.

The gambling is always scrupulously fair, but the gambling company makes its profit of nearly fifty per cent. If you like to be a shareholder you may go into the market and buy some shares. They are always at an enormous premium. These gambling ogres slay men and pick their bones and crunch them. Baden-Baden with all its exterior splendour and surrounding loveliness, may well be called a hell—it is indeed a hell. But now the government of Baden has resolved to do away with this plague-spot. The gambling is to be put down. Benazet has had notice to quit, Benazet is going to Monaco. This is to be the great revolution. *Voilà tout!* The pity is, however, that for all this Benazet takes no steps about moving. I believe the reason is, that his notice has been indefinitely prolonged in order to give him time for winding up so enormous an affair.

He came to Baden-Baden, this Benazet, after Louis Philippe had abolished the gambling-houses in Paris. It is high time they should have been abolished. There are fearful stories of those old Parisian gambling days, such as though covered have certainly not altogether ceased to exist. A friend of mine has been telling me of one dark night's work, in which a vast sum was lost and won, and next morning there were about ten bodies in the Morgue. The gamblers withdrew to Germany. Homburg is, on the whole, the head-quarters, but Baden-Baden has always attracted the greatest number of English people. The roulette-table, and *trente et quarante*, especially the latter, became the most productive and popular games. Everybody hopes that the revolving wheel will see the jingling marble in the lucky spot. From morning till night, year after year, that incessant marble has been keeping up its ominous rattle. At first the small governments of Germany welcomed their new visitants. The apparent ad-

vantages they offered were considerable. A vast space of land was laid out in groves and gardens. A vast impetus was given to all local business, a large annual sum, a considerable constituent of his revenue, was paid to the reigning prince. Another large sum was annually given to the charities and municipal objects of the town. But as time has passed by, the German governments have perceived that all this has not been obtained without heavy counterbalancing disadvantages. They have begun to perceive how little creditable is any revenue drawn from such a pernicious source. It has become clear that in each case a most demoralising effect has been exercised upon town and neighbourhood. It has been truly said that the very atmosphere of a gaming-house, and the sight of piles of gold to be acquired by chance and the turn of a wheel, and not by honest labour, is demoralizing. Moreover, it is found that just as the blackguards and blacklegs increase, so does the best company of the watering-places fall off. But now it is the wish of the Diet that throughout Germany the gambling-places should cease. The governments of Baden and Nassau have taken final measures. It is feared at Homburg that when the aged Landgrave dies and the Duke of Darmstadt comes in for his inheritance he will put down the gambling by force. The insignificant establishment in the Electorate of Cassel will then soon follow. Due notice, it has been said, has been given to Benazet and Co.

The Baden government, unlike any mere petty principality, is quite independent of the gambling establishment, and it is perhaps owing to the feeling of insecurity respecting their tenure that the gambling establishment is open to strictures which perhaps hardly apply to others of the class. 'Bradshaw's Continental Guide'—a publication, let me say in passing, which on one summer tour put me to great inconvenience by the considerable inaccuracy of its information, and which should always be superseded by the local guides—'Bradshaw' quotes a passage to the effect that this establishment, 'according to the testimony of those who are knowing in such matters, is so regulated as to give the bank more chances in its favour, and, of course, against the playing public, than is customary at more liberal establishments elsewhere.' Another writer alleges against them the systematic violation of at least two fundamental rules. One of them is that the player should in every case deposit his stakes in money down. 'This is a wholesome rule, inas-

much as it does interpose some kind of check upon reckless gambling. But the evil of the credit system is added to the evil of the gambling system. The croupiers when they know themselves to be quite secure, in obedience to a nod or more explicit request, will advance necessary funds for carrying on the war. Again it is stated that all the unclaimed winnings are to be given to the poor. No attention appears to be given to this rule. The croupiers, perhaps, a little abstractedly, will rake up the leavings, which thus go to swell the bloated profits of the bank.

It is unnecessary to give any melodramatic stories of the evils of the gambling system, with which the public has always been shocked. Indeed such melodramas, probably occur rarely and are then hushed up carefully. But I venture to say that one cannot stand by the table for an hour without witnessing something saddening and disgusting. It is not agreeable, for instance, to witness that cold perspiration of anxiety which is breaking out upon so many villainous brows. Again, how often the hand is thrust into the hair, the action done in quiet, gentlemanly fashion; but the hair is ruthlessly torn under the influence of terror and disappointment. So, if a gentleman handsomely arrayed with watch and chain and rings, suddenly disappears after losing, and then makes his appearance again to resume his play, minus the decorative portion of his attire, the unsoothing suspicion is created that in the interim he has been paying a visit to an avuncular relation. I travelled to Baden once in the company of a young pair, a sweet pretty girl and her husband on their bridal trip. He looked perfectly happy and contented, but I saw him day after day in the saloon, neglecting his bride for play, and his looks rapidly assuming an expression very much the reverse of the former one. It is not every one who possesses the strength of mind enjoyed by my friend Tompkins. Tompkins, be it said, is a man of very rigid views, both morally and ecclesiastically; he has a natural taste for denunciation, which he has carefully improved and his denunciation of the Baden system was certainly very fine. But it was the nature of the beast to have a covetous little soul, and those volleys of spinning gold and silver coin fairly fascinated him. At least it would not be wrong just to try once, only once; he would never do it again, and he could afterwards repent this wicked sinfulness. A single napoleon, if lost, would not ruin him, and if he won, he would take the good gifts of the fates,

and ask no questions. With a palpitating heart a napoleon was deposited, and then came the whirr, and then the croupier presented three napoleons to the inexpressibly gratified Tompkins. With a grateful heart Tompkins received them and exultingly walked away, and from that hour to this he has never again gambled.

But among my Baden-Baden reminiscences one recollection especially rises before me. You remember, perhaps, that beautiful villa on the right hand, almost opposite the Victoria Hotel, just before you enter the grounds of the Kur-Saal. You must have stopped to admire that charming garden with its stately vases of flowers. That was the abode of a nobleman, well known at the courts of the Continent—better known there, perhaps, than at his own,—the late Duke of Hamilton. I well remember, one beautiful midsummer evening, about a year and a half ago, hardly a year before his death, a conversation which I had with that most princely and kind-hearted man. It so happens that I knew something of him, although he was one of our greatest dukes, and the present writer is altogether a different kind of person. Amid the mob of princes he moved pre-eminent, conspicuous for that noble countenance which the sculptors of Rome regarded as the perfection of manly beauty. He had married into the reigning house of this country, the Princess Marie of Baden, a lady who in girlhood was the greatest ornament of her court, for sense, liveliness and wit; a first cousin of the Emperor of the French. He and his wife, by imperial ordinance, were received on the footing of royalty in Paris. These foreign connections in great measure drew him away from his own court and country which he was so eminently calculated to adorn. He generally spent only a month of the year in Scotland, where he had very extensive estates around his ancestral seats of Hamilton Palace and Brodick Castle. His liberality made him beloved by his tenantry, who are raising a monument to his memory. But the liberality of the duke was everywhere known. Although he was not a Roman Catholic—although strong influences were in vain brought to bear upon him which might induce him to change his religion—he is understood to have greatly assisted the Pope from his private resources at a time when pecuniary aid was acceptable. The unrivalled pedigree of the duke placed him almost in the position of royalty. It was well known that at one period of

our history his line might have founded a dynasty in England; and so late as the reign of Queen Anne it was a matter of firm expectation that the wished-for union would not be accomplished, and in that case that the Duke of Hamilton would assume the crown of Scotland. The student of history will remember how Scotland then trembled on the verge of a civil war. When the Baden alliance was made, it was fully understood that the Duke of Hamilton was as much on a footing of royalty as the Grand Duke of Baden. On a certain day, in the season of last summer, the duke, with his son, were at a splendid party given by the Duchess of Buccleuch. On the evening of that day, on the morning of which the party given by the duchess had broken up, his grace arrived at Paris. It was, I believe, his intention to proceed forthwith to Baden-Baden, where the other members of his family were then staying at his villa. Formerly he had had a mansion in Paris, but now his headquarters were generally at the Hôtel Bristol. The evening of his arrival the duke was at the opera; and after the opera, in the company of a well-known *ex-départ* member of our Paris Embassy, he went to the famous supper place, the *Maison Dorée*, on the Boulevards. The early dawn of the summer day was breaking as he prepared to go homeward. He had to descend a long flight of steps. Of the hurried events that followed there are different versions, as is always the case respecting events of great importance and great rapidity; but I believe that the facts are substantially these. A servant wished to assist the duke with his overcoat, and the duke declining his assistance, stepped back somewhat hastily. In so doing he missed his footing, and was precipitated down the stairs. He was taken up insensible, and carried to his hotel. Medical aid soon arrived, and a French course of treatment was adopted. It was concussion of the brain, and from the first there was no hope. His family were summoned to his bedside. To the same melancholy spot came the most illustrious lady in France. The Emperor was at Vichy, but the Empress being at St. Cloud, soon arrived.

I am violating no confidence when I mention, what was well known in Paris at the time, how courteous and kind was the Empress in her attention to the sufferer, herself administering the prescribed medicaments, and kneeling in prayer by the bedside. Only some wandering gleams of reason revisited the sufferer, in which he re-

cognised the Duchess and Empress. His body was conducted from Paris to Cherbourg, and thence to Scotland, by the Empress's commands, with almost royal honours. He will be remembered by many far and wide; not the least here in Baden. The season presented nothing more delightful than the evening music parties which from time to time he gave. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum.* How good a motto is that for all of us! And indeed it was very difficult to believe anything but good of the duke. That kindness, which was not only the most perfect expression of politeness, but expressed the very soul of generosity and courtesy, and kind feeling,

— For manners are the fruit of noble minds, was ever shown by the duke, so as to embody the best notion of the practical chivalry of the age. This peculiar grace was not only exhibited in courtly scenes, to win the admiration of less polished men, but was manifested in deeds of real kindness and goodness, so privately and unostentatiously performed that there would be no applause save of his own heart and conscience. Many of his race have left historical names, but perhaps not many have so engraved their recollection on friendly or grateful hearts.

Εἰς αὐτὸν οὐ σέλο λαλᾶμενδὶ ἔσμεν.

One beauty of this lazy Baden-Baden life is that one reads a variety of books which at any other time one would not think of reading. How, in some old country-house, where the library has not kept pace with modern literature, is not one glad to seize upon the 'Annual Register,' or devour eagerly even the largest of Richardson's novels? Now here is an odd volume of the 'Revue des Deux Mondes.' What an admirable review that is, by-the-by, though perhaps rather degenerating in tone just now; how generous—sometimes how extravagantly generous, in its appreciation of England. I wonder some publisher does not hit upon the plan of publishing a mixed review or magazine every fortnight, on the model of the 'Revue des Deux Mondes,' and other French publications of the *quinzaine*. Any enlightened publisher is welcome to this hint; perhaps my own will turn it over in his mind. But I have been immensely amused and interested by reading some French translations of Tennyson, in one of the numbers; and by this statement I would not wish to reflect at all severely on translations characterised with much taste and great knowledge of our language. I open on

the first line of 'Airy, fairy Lillian,' 'Oh! pleure, je t'en supplie, Lillian folâtre, Lillian de mai. La gaieté sans éclipse est pour moi une fatigue.' But here are two stanzas of Lady Clara Vere de Vere:—

'Lady Clara Vere de Vere, vous réveilliez en moi d'étranges souvenirs; vos tilleuls touffus n'ont pas fleuri trois fois depuis que j'ai vu mort le jeune Laurence. Oh! que vos yeux sont doux et que vous parlez bien à voix basse! Vous êtes sans doute une piperesse merveilleuse. Mais il avait alors à son cou quelque chose que vous n'eussiez pas vu de bon cœur.

'Lady Clara Vere de Vere, quand il arriva ainsi sous les yeux de sa mère—celle-ci sentit frémir ses entrailles; elle eut contre vous certains éians de vérité soudaine. Pour ne rien oser j'entendis alors une amère parole—qui, répétée, blesserait vos oreilles; et ses manières n'avaient pas cette inexorable sérénité qui distingue la race des de Vere.'

But 'arise and let us wander forth,' Fling down the book and get into the air and sunshine. It is very sultry, and looks like rain. I hope I shall gain the Conversation House before one of those sudden Baden showers comes down. There I shall be protected both from heat and rain. But who is this? It is Pipkins! What aileth thee, O Pipkins? Wherefore are thy intelligent features overspread with an expression of grief and annoyance? Reveal to me the story of thy joys and sorrows. Can I lend thee a ten-pound note? No, my Pipkins, I cannot, for otherwise enough would not remain to waft me over to Albion's isle. "Dry as the remainder biscuit after voyage"—thou rememberest the quotation, for didst thou not, like a prince, aquander regretted guineas at the Stratford Tercentenary—my voyage is well-nigh done, and very few and very dry are my biscuits. But if the humbler fiver will aid and comfort you, give me the I. O. U. and it is thine. Oh, unhappy boy, and worthy of a better fate, what tale is this that thou dost tell me? Not garotter, and not ticket-of-leave man, but Mr. Leech's young ladies with their pretty hats, are the dangerous classes! And Cousin Kate—oh that dangerous cousinship!—has tried the roulette-table and has lost, and has asked thee to lend; and alas! thou hast lost too, and hast not the wherewithal. What shocking tale is this? Has Kate no mamma, no chaperone, no friend? She is a very good sort of a fellow, you say, and you have had a little borrowing before, and she has lots of money, and one day you hope to enthrone her in the Pipkinian halls. Even so; but if *Lui et Elle* thus burn the candle at both

ends, very speedily will the candle, however long and thick, be burned out. Thy Kate is but a silly goose; and, to quote thy own jargon, will come to much grief. Let her go to the kindly spectactled old lady, the aunt and guardian, whom she must have deceived rather wickedly and cruelly, before she could lose all this money at a gaming-table, and bewail her errors, and try to be a better girl for the future. My Pipkins, with whom I have so often climbed the heights of Shotover, and boated down to Nuneham, and partaken of the social meal at the 'Mitre,' and passed so many morning and evening hours in neighbouring rooms in the old quad, take counsel of thy friend. Let not this free and happy life here leave a sting, the comedy become tragic, thy Baden holiday be a mistake. Speak gently to thy Kate, or rather scold her; and above all things set her a better example, and tell her to avoid that old and vulgar iniquity of gambling. So shall she be a penitent and reformed and gentle Kate, yea the Shrew Tamed, and will hereafter wisely bring up her own daughters; but if not, if she remain fast to her fastness, leave her, O my friend: not to put too fine a point upon it, jilt her, or she will jilt you. There are as good Kates in the sea as ever came out of it.

These desultory notes will perhaps give some notion of the desultory Baden life. The 'social' notices might be continued indefinitely. Something might be said of the noble-looking *militaire* close at hand, who has received a delicate hint that the Baden waters are not the best for his complaint, and who, if he does not take the hint, will to-morrow be politely transferred to the frontiers. I might also commence a thrilling 'Romance of the Black Forest,' for which there are plenty of materials, whether of mediæval or modern life. If my readers want full details, Adolphe Joanne's book is tolerably good. An-

other is Guinot's finely illustrated book, where, indeed, the letterpress is unequal to the illustrations, which has been issued in M. Clays's beautiful type, of the Rue St. Benoît, in English, in French, and in German. I am conscious of at least one palpable omission—which to the valetudinarian will be like leaving out Hamlet in 'Hamlet'—that have said nothing of the Baden waters. But I candidly avow that I know nothing of the mysteries of the Trinkhalle, and my own acquaintance has hardly been cast among those who do. But I believe the waters are, in their way, of some value, and I believe there are some people who are quite unable to live without them. Such professional authorities as Dr. Granvill and Mr. Edwin Lee may be consulted on such points. But go to the gardens and the beautiful villa of La Favorite, and try to construct for yourself some story respecting the Princess Sibylla. Luxurious is the retreat, like that of the Decameron, whither the fair ladies of Florence retired to cheat, by love and love tales, the plague, whose deadly imminent shadow was upon them. But such recollections seem ever to have haunted the gay court and festal delights of the villa. Close by is the Hermitage, whither the fair ladies diligently retired during Lent, where we see a straw bed, the haircloth, the scourge, the jagged girdle, and the sharp-pointed cross. Amid the scenes which such instruments suggest passed the days of Lent, and then frivolity and romance and enjoyment once more set in. But this must be my last *coucher*. I leave Baden, whereof it is confidently asserted by its upholders, that it is the very prettiest spot in the whole world. This assertion is made, however, in every shape and form of a great variety of places. It is certainly a very beautiful place; all the more beautiful when its ugly moral deformity shall for ever be swept away.



THE ORDEAL FOR WIVES.

A Story of London Life.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE MORALS OF MAYFAIR.'

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A HOLOCAUST.

MR. ARTHUR PEEL's face, as he sat alone at breakfast on the morning after Mrs. Strangways' party, was a complete unwritten sermon upon the vanity of all human desires.

He had lived, he had worked for one sole object during the last twelve or eighteen months—the attainment of Miss Lynes' money: and this was the hour of fruition—he had won it. Position, ease, honour from henceforth, instead of the career of shame and—what probably to him was worse—of absolute privation, into which he must have followed his brother's footsteps, in a very few more months, had the present Golconda turned out barren to him. He had won. His path was to be from henceforth among the promised places of the earth: and lo! all seemed suddenly the vanity of vanities to him; and his Château Lafitte was bitter to his taste; his Cabana unsoothing; the contemplation of his own face in the mirror before him unflattering. Château Lafitte, Cabana, image of Arthur Peel's well-cut features—Miss Lynes' image mingled with, and spoilt them all!

Nature will assert herself occasionally even in the case of the most artificial dandy extant; and when she does so, and a man, young and physically strong still, is on the eve of selling his own body and soul for money, his feelings, I can assure you, are about the bitterest and the most self-abasing of which human nature is capable. A girl sells herself and nature—*id est*, her weakness, her helplessness, her necessity for another's support, cry out and absolve her, somewhat, to her own heart. A man sells himself, and all that belongs to manhood within him cries shame upon the barter! With hands, with shoulders to work as a

free man, he submits, voluntarily, to the position of a well-fed slave for life—a slave, too, oftentimes, to the cruellest, the meanest, the most pitiless of all slaveholders—a woman without true generosity of soul herself, and with secret, jealous knowledge of the reasons for which her victim married her in her heart.

And in Arthur Peel's case all natural, instinctive disgust at the part he had pledged himself to play, was heightened tenfold by the bitter, haunting knowledge of Jane Dashwood's face, of her flashing eyes, her curling lips, as he had last seen them the night before. In a niche, apart from the large-eyed Parisian graces and impossibly-posed dancers which filled Mr. Peel's room, hung a simple little portrait, in crayons, of a girl's head—Jane Dashwood at seventeen. The eyes, the lips seemed smiling on him with the expression of those first days in which Jane ever loved him, in mocking contrast to the eyes and lips that had scorned him twelve hours before; in horrible contrast to those other eyes and lips that now were *his*—his own legitimate, dearly-bought property, until death, a chance too remote even to hope for, should take them from him.

'I shall get used to it—I shall get used to it all!' was the sole form of consolation that reiterated itself through the limited arena of Mr. Peel's brain. 'A fellow doesn't know, in six months, whether his wife's handsome or ugly; and I shall meet Jane when she's married to Feltham, d—— him! and she'll be sure to flirt like beans; and perhaps she'd have done the same if she'd married me, and one gets used to everything; and a fellow doesn't know in six months whether his

wife is handsome or ugly, d—her!’ And then the eyes looked down on him from that girlish face upon the wall, and the clock above the chimney-piece struck one; and he remembered that at three o’clock he was to be at Mrs. Strangways’ house, ready to undergo all the privileges of an engaged man in his first *tête-à-tête* interview with his betrothed.

The sudden realization of this last immediate duty disgusted him more than all former vague, intangible prospects had done. Would Miss Lynes’ eyes assume the same affectionate expression which, under the influence of champagne, they had done the night before? Would it—great heavens! *would* it be expected of him to be ardent? He could kiss her, he thought, when he went and when he came away, pretty easily; but heavy love-making, for two or three hours!—love-making that would at all come up to the demand which the expression of her face seemed to foretoken! And then, if he didn’t do everything that was expected of him, the chance of losing her! You are never sure of an heiress until your back is turned upon the altar of St. George’s; and old Morty was obviously only too ready to be brought on at a moment’s notice; and no doubt *he* would be able to get up any amount of passion that would be required of him.

Mr. Peel’s mind was not accustomed to any very great influx of ideas at any time; and really the amount of thinking—and all unpleasant thinking—that he went through during this forenoon, quite overcame him. He had risen very early in the morning, between nine and ten, I believe—as the fatuity of our nature generally makes men do on the first day from whence life is to be more disagreeable to them than before—had risen early; had smoked five cigars; had taken his brandy-and-soda; had looked at his breakfast; had drunk his *Lafitte*; and now, at one o’clock, felt as though about a month of ordinary life had elapsed since he rose from his bed.

‘It’s thinking so much,’ he de-

cided at last, with one of those incisive intuitions which we are accustomed to regard as the exclusive property of genius. ‘Nothing bores a fellow’s head like thinking; and there’s no good in it either, for you only think the same thing over and over again, and a man gets used to everything; and in six months’ . . . *et cetera*. And then he desisted obstinately from pacing up and down the room, and flung himself down in his easy-chair before the fire, and looked at his slippers (which had been worked by Jane), and wondered on what kind of principles Feltham had conducted his engagement—a speculation which brought him round, quite easily and without any exertion of his, to the prospect the afternoon held out before him, and the expression which the heiress’s eyes, under the influence of Moet and affection, had worn the night before.

At the same moment, Jane Dashwood was thinking of him, as she stepped into a hired brougham at the door of her sister’s house. Thinking of him with brain on fire, with resolve of sharp and instant vengeance in her heart; with all the superiority that an ordinarily clever woman must possess over an ordinarily stupid man in any passionate crisis of life.

In all other phases of love I have observed that men act and women feel: in infidelity, on either side, women pass at once from the subjective to the objective; and this almost without a variation. A man who has been betrayed suffers silently, or goes to Iceland, or doesn’t suffer at all. A woman either nominates a successor, or plans direct, sharp punishment upon the guilty one in the first hour of her abandonment. All unreasoning creatures do the same. Look how a child rebels from the pain which, in maturity, he knows he must accept. During the long and bitter night, only two ideas had been present in Jane Dashwood’s brain: first, to bruise every fibre of Arthur Peel’s heart, if she could, before finishing with him for ever; secondly, to recall Lord Feltham, and to begin the

purchase of the *trousseau* at once. Action she *must* have; and by the time the day had dawned her mind had definitely resolved upon the shape in which her revenge should show itself.

'Don't come—don't come with me,' she cried, hastily, when Esther's face showed repugnance to the scheme she was proposing. 'If you think it improper, don't do violence to your feelings. I can get Lawrence to go with me, or I can go alone. What do I care about appearances?'

'But to go to the barracks, Jane! Young women of our age to go alone to the Knightsbridge barracks! If you were to write to him instead, now——'

Miss Dashwood laughed disdainfully. 'You are just as bad as Millicent, Esther. All women are just the same in such things. Maintain the letter, never mind the spirit of the law! I repeat to you, I am going to visit Arthur Peel this morning, and I ask you, for the last time, to accompany me. How are either of us to be injured by such a deed, pray? I know by your face what you think: Lord Feltham might hear of it. Let him do so and give me up, and I will marry some one else in six weeks—the best thing for us both, perhaps! Paul might give you a sermon? Let him do so, and give over paying you meaningless attentions at the same time. It would be the best thing that could happen to both of you!'

As well argue with a wild cat brought to bay, as with one of these small, blonde women newly robbed of her love, and, worse far, newly wounded in her vanity. Jane at that moment would have given up her life, her reputation, her very beauty, almost, but to lower Arthur Peel, heart and soul, in the dust; and, seeing this, Esther put aside her own scruples and consented, without another word, to be her companion. Only as they drove along, and as she marked Jane's flushed cheek and tiny clenched fists, and heard the bitter scorching words that ever and anon broke from her tongue, she did thank heaven that of all this she had not

even the rudimentary elements in her own nature. She loved Paul passionately. Beauty, life, repute—well, perhaps she would have given them all if such gifts could in anything have ministered to his good. But to turn against him by a hair's breadth, under neglect, under cruelest betrayal to turn against him—no, this was not in her, and she thanked heaven that it was not. She had little cause to do so. The majority of our thanksgivings are as mistaken as the majority of our prayers. Women who rebel, who fight, who humiliate, who elect successors, are of the many: women who accept, and live their love and their despair out, are of the few. And nature is beneficent. The many (in numberless other things than love) are really and intrinsically the wisest and the happiest of the earth.

If his lawyer had walked into his room and informed him that seventeen of his relations were dead, and he had inherited his twentieth cousin's estate and title in Yorkshire; if all the Hebrews of his large eastern acquaintance had appeared, and offered to burn his own bills before his eyes; if Morty Delamaine had walked in to communicate the fact of Miss Lynes having changed her mind, or to challenge him, Arthur Peel, to instant single and mortal combat;—if any, or all of these circumstances had occurred to Mr. Peel at once, his brain could not have undergone more absolute, unconditional vertigo than it did, half an hour later, on the sudden appearance of the two young women in his room.

'You are not to announce us to Mr. Peel,' Jane had said to the servant, whom she knew well, and who, open-eyed and open-mouthed with horror, recognised in her one of the young ladies who had dismounted in the barrack-square. 'It's a joke—the fulfilment of a bet; Mr. Peel knows about it, and won't be surprised to see us.' And then, without faltering a second, she walked up to the door the man pointed out, gave one decisive tap, waited for Arthur's voice to bid her enter, and walked in.

He was staring at his slippers still; and an expletive rather more forcible than his present state of mind might have promised, rose to his lips at his servant's supposed interruption. As he half-turned his head he heard the rustle of a silk dress. He sprang up, expecting—well, whatever he expected, it was not half so bad as what he saw. His face, his lips turned livid. The apparition which strikes death to Don Giovanni, preparatory to the blue fire of the last scene of all, is not more appalling to that unhappy reprobate than was the sight of the woman he best loved to Mr. Peel.

'Jane—*You* here!'

'Yes, Arthur, I am here.'

When a woman is going to be pitilessly cruel or grossly unjust to the man she loves, she nearly always comes up to time with a smiling face and nerves of steel. This is their warfare, you must remember; these are their moments of courage,—the brief standing-point often out of God knows how many years of patient slavery or wrong! For the first time in her life, Jane found herself where imagination had so often taken her, in Arthur Peel's room. In one second, with one glance, her eyes took in every little familiar detail that told of her among his belongings. Her Tennyson, stolen from her long ago, and when they were at the boy-and-girl, or sentimental scene of the tragedy; her drawings on the wall; her photograph upon the mantelpiece; her portrait taken in the first flush of her youth and freshness, and looking now straight into his faithless face. She saw all these: she felt herself for the first time in his room—a frightfully dangerous influence to a woman as much in love as she was—and her voice was as steady, her cheek as unvarying as the voice and cheek of the coolest general who ever lived under the opening fire of a battle.

'I am here, Arthur. Miss Fleming and I have come to pay you a morning visit. I hope we have not disturbed you too early?'

'Of course not. I—I wish, I mean—I think you might have sent for me. Really I don't like to—'

'To see us here!' Miss Dashwood finished for him, as Mr. Peel stood, the very picture of shame and shyness, staring first at one, then at the other of his visitors, and unconsciously holding the end of his cigar far away behind him. 'We will waive the incivility of the remark in consideration of its entire sincerity. You don't like to see me here. I never thought you would. However, I have come on an errand of considerable importance to myself, and I will behave well to you. I will not keep you long.'

If she had been tempestuous, as he had seen her so often before, Arthur Peel would probably have borne what was coming better; but his sense of the tornado which those set lips, those calm polite words *must* forebode, crushed him into a state bordering on literal absolute terror. He had ridden 'into the jaws of death' with the rest, without as much as a flush upon his fair girlish face; 'and, by Jove! I'd rather go through *that* again, rather face a dozen Cossack regiments at once,' he explained, when recounting the scene to one of his friends afterwards, 'than have to stand there, like a cursed fool as I was, under the fire of that girl's eyes. Hang her!' Mr. Peel would add, sulkily—for when he had got to the stage of confession he was already Miss Lynes' lawful possessor—'Hang her! what right had she to come down upon me in such an infernal demoniac temper? an engaged woman, and flirting with half the men in London besides! And I'd neither sense nor spirit enough to tell her so—that's always the way with a fellow's head; everything comes into it afterwards; and at the time—I mean when you're mixed up with women—you've no more idea what to say or do than—than—'

And then, Mr. Peel's brain not being fertile in imagery, he was wont to fill up the vacuum by adding 'the doose!' which, if you take it as a pet name for the embodiment of evil, was, to say the least, inconsequential: that astute personage (I speak as dramatic art has shown him forth) being never at a loss what to say or do in any situa-

tion; above all, in those wherein you are mixed up with women.

'No; I will not keep you long, Mr. Peel.' She had to go on herself, for no word came from the young man's lips, and Esther Fleming, who wished herself in the remotest part of the earth, was pretending to examine a florid but un-anatomical portrait of Mademoiselle Parepa on the wall. 'I have come on an errand which can be executed in five minutes. You are going to marry Miss Lynes, I hear.'

'Jane,' he stammered out, 'What was I to do? I am a ruined man. You know it—and you gave me up first!'

'I don't think I am questioning your good sense or your thorough liberty to make any person you choose your wife. I simply wished to hear the truth from you. You are going to marry Miss Lynes?' And now the muscles round her mouth did tremble: the mouth is always the first feature to turn traitor: and, you know, this *was* the very wrench of death to her; and she was looking into the eyes of the man to please whom during three years of her life she would at any time have sold her own soul, looking into them for the last time while she should live! 'You are going to marry her. I have [not been misinformed?]

'I repeat, Jane, that you gave me up first.'

'Mr. Peel, spare prevarication for some occasion when it can by possibility stand you in good stead. It is simply foolish now. Are you going to marry Miss Lynes?'

'I am.'

Her face grew white all over, all power of speech for a minute forsook her: and only the fierce voice of passionate, natural jealousy cried out in her heart! For a minute—a minute only; then she calmed again. 'I did not think I had been misinformed; indeed, for a long time past I have seen what it was intended you should do; but I thought it right to let you make the statement plainly. Mr. Peel, you have not had time yet to show Miss Lynes my letters, have you?'

'Miss Dashwood!'

'Oh, please don't be indignant. You know I never can endure anything like a scene, and you must remember you used to show me Mrs. Strangways' notes whenever I liked to take the trouble to read them. You haven't had time yet to show mine? tell me truly, please.'

'If you think me dishonourable enough to do such a thing, I wonder you care to take my word as a denial.'

'Dishonourable!' You should have heard the emphasis on the word. 'Dishonourable! Mr. Peel, I am one-and-twenty, and I have known you intimately for more than three years. I forget all about honour and dishonour as we were taught to define them in our school-themes: I know only the distinctions that exist between them in men's minds. How you deal with each other in the great affairs of gambling and horse-racing I neither know nor care. Where such small matters as a woman's peace or a woman's reputation are concerned, all men of your class are dishonourable to the core—and you above them all! I haven't a father or a brother at hand to do the office for me, so I have come now to put it out of your power to injure me. Give me back my letters, please.'

The tone in which she made the last request was quiet, almost passive. She clasped her hands together, and leaning them upon the mantelpiece, rested her cheek down wearily upon them. You may recollect that at the moment when Oliver Carew had finally lost Miss Fleming he coveted more to possess her than he had ever done in the days when her heart, of right, was his. I regret that I have only the same class of feeling to impute to Arthur Peel. If I wrote sensation novels nothing should induce me to be guilty of this kind of tame reiteration; but being only a humble depicter of such men and things as I have seen, I can't avoid going in well-worn grooves. And the majority of human creatures are so trite, so consistent, so uniform even in their moments of strongest emotion, of deepest passion! Arthur Peel looked at these clasped hands he had kissed so often,

at that delicate pale cheek, at those half-quivering lips, and was sensible of as much acute loathing to Miss Lynes, as much fierce jealousy of Lord Feltham, as much disgust against his debts and himself and the whole world in a mass, as it is perhaps possible for a man well used-up in London life, and with originally shallow passions, and a very small amount of that great reflector and multiplier of the passions—brain, to sustain.

'I never thought we should come to this, Jane; upon my soul I didn't! I hope you don't mean to be bad friends with me always.'

He touched one of her hands nervously, imploringly, and put his face close to hers. Miss Dashwood drew herself away from him coldly. Under any other circumstances in the world such an appeal coming to her from Arthur must have had some effect. But nearly all women when they are jealous (of a legitimate object) recoil from a personal appeal as they would from an insult. I don't explain this: but I know it is so.

'Mr. Peel, you make me feel what I incurred in coming here without a man to protect me. I don't know, though, that I particularly admire you for wishing to convey the reproach. You have no right, you know you have none, to regard me in another light than a stranger, even had I come here actually alone. You have no right to remind me of the past any more than you have to the possession of my letters—or of this!'

She walked straight across to the sketch of herself that I have mentioned, took it down from the wall, and began, but with trembling hands (for her courage was going fast and passion gaining ground), to remove it from the frame.

'Jane, *that*, at least, is mine. You shall not take it away! I'll show it to no one while I live, but I will not part from it. It is mine!'

'Legally yours, no doubt.' And now she looked at him with the kindling glow in her eyes that he knew so well. 'Legally yours; but by all moral right, by all just right, mine. I won't trust even this to

you. When you are married, you shall not have it in your power to show my picture to your friends, and say, "That's the girl's face who loved me for years, who would have loved me always if I had only chosen to take her." Boast of me, you will, no doubt, but you shall have no tangible proof that I can make away with to bear evidence to your words. This picture belongs to my past life, sir!—my past life! that you destroyed for me just as pitilessly as I destroy this poor piece of paper now. Let it all go together. I regret none of it.'

She looked one instant at the picture of her own happy, girlish face, then tore it deliberately across three, four times, walked back to her place, and flung the fragments in the fire.

Have you ever been present at a holocaust of this kind? Do you know the strange, shocked sense—like witnessing the death of a living thing—that such an act of violence occasions? Esther Fleming, whose interest was, of course, only the vicarious one that all persons under twenty-five must feel in all love affairs—Esther Fleming felt quite a spasm of pain as the sharp rending of the paper fell on her ears. Arthur Peel grew crimson to his temples.

'You have done what you had no right to do, Jane. You have robbed me of a thing that might have been of use to me in the kind of life I am going to lead for the future—a thing it would never have harmed you for me to keep.'

Justice and truth were on his side in this; and Jane knew it, and was the bitterer for the knowledge. Besides, her blood was up, as some men's is after the first death-stroke they bestow in action. The first act which ministered to her revenge had stirred in her the desire for further vengeance.

'Jane Dashwood's picture, as she was three years ago, could be of no use to Miss Lynes' husband now. It is the picture of a person who exists no longer. Three years ago Jane Dashwood was young, loving, with all her faults, and now—Mr. Peel, why do we waste time in this way? Give me my letters, please. You haven't burnt them,

you know; you told me so not a week ago. Give them to me. I have brought back every one of yours.'

And she drew a packet from her pocket (not a very large packet: following an inevitable natural law, Mr. Peel's love-letters had covered about one-tenth the bulk of paper that had been consumed by her to him), and threw it down before him upon the table.

Not Mr. Redpath himself, suddenly convicted in the very act of indorsing one of his nefarious bills, could have looked more abjectly conscience-stricken than did Arthur Peel as he proceeded to unlock a table-drawer and bring forth from it Jane Dashwood's letters. He had kept them all. In this kind of folly I believe that women are fully equalled, occasionally outstripped, by most very young men. From the long school-girl love-letters, written in the first days of their engagement, down to the short notes, often consisting of only two or three blurred lines, which she had written to him since her engagement with Lord Feltham, he had kept them all. The whole written record of so much folly and of so much love; of endless falsehood, and yet, in one sense, of the best and truest part of two otherwise wasted and artificial lives.

'They will make a goodly pile,' cried Jane, with her little hard laugh. 'Mr. Peel, may I ask you to give me some string? It will really be as much as Esther and I will be able to do to carry them away between us.'

He gave her what she wanted; he watched patiently, feeling—and I believe I may add looking—the most utter fool, while she tied the letters up in two compact, carefully-arranged packets. But not till she had quite done—till she had risen and told her companion she was ready to depart—did a word pass his lips. Then it came; quite with a natural outburst. I think the better of Mr. Peel for feeling something so like a sob come in his throat as he spoke. 'You are harder on me than I deserve, Jane. I am a ruined man: it is forced upon me to marry

Miss Lynes; but I was not the first to be false, and I have never ceased to love you.'

She threw the packets of letters upon the table, and turned upon him full. Small and blonde though she was, the greatest tragic actress of them all might have copied from her in this moment of intense, jealous passion—by far the most frequent kind of tragedy that the monotony of modern life ever shows to us. She was too essentially feminine to be anything but quiet in her gestures and in her voice. It was in the scorching fire of her blue eyes—in the tension of the muscles round the mouth—in the unconscious iron clench of her small hands, that an artist would have read the true embodiment of passion. No need of noise, no need of violence for a Lucretia or a Norma who could rival life like this!

'You were not the first to be faithless? Mr. Peel, those words are false, and you know it! I accepted Lord Feltham because—because you told me to do it! You know the night well, at the Opera, when you told me, and I did accept him next day. And I cared for you on that day just as I'd done from the first, and I wrote and told you so. The letter was in my hand a minute ago; and I said, if you only spoke one word I'd break it off and marry you, and try to make the best of poverty and disgrace, if need be, for your sake! You know what you answered—if, indeed, in one long tissue of falsehoods you should chance to remember this especial one—you talked of your love being too great to let you bring me to poverty, and that, miserable though it made you, you would rather see me marry with the prospect of becoming rich and—and—great God! why do I repeat it? why do I remember it? All my own falsehood, all my treachery to Lord Feltham, I take upon myself: *that* hasn't got to be spoken of to you. To you I have been faithful, sir!—faithful, with the miserable, contemptible fidelity that an ill-used horse or dog will show towards a cruel master, through three long years! Last night I woke up to see the truth, to

see that I have loved something of my own imagination, not you—not the poor, weak, vain creature that I now know Mr. Arthur Peel to be. Everything has turned out best for us both. Married to Lord Feltham, I shall have money, I shall have position; married to Miss Lynes, you will have money. We shall see nothing more of each other: and to me, at least, the lesson of the past has been a wholesome one. Mr. Peel, good-bye.'

But Mr. Peel never took her outstretched hand. He was in that state of utter, voiceless collapse to which nothing but a woman's tongue can ever reduce an Englishman (a Frenchman can weep on many occasions pertaining to love). That Jane Dashwood could look in his face and tell him she had never loved him was monstrous; but that she should convict him, as she really seemed to do, of gross dishonour, was worse. He felt he wasn't a bit guiltier than all other young men of his moral and mental calibre; that he had only played fast and loose with the girl, just as she had done with himself; and that even if he had not offered to Miss Lynes, the chances were ten to one that Jane would have married Feltham in six months. To all the rest of the truth, of the pathos underlying her passionate and unjust words—which you, I hope, see—Mr. Peel was naturally blind. The few high qualities in a faulty, artificial character like poor Jane's, are rarely discernible by inferior minds; and Mr. Peel was grades and grades beneath her, both in heart and brain. He knew that she had glossy hair and white teeth, fair complexion and rounded waist; also, that she possessed a bad temper and infinite tenderness for himself: nothing further, except, perhaps, at this moment, when it was dimly dawning on the chaos of his thoughts that she was capable of demoniac jealousy and revenge, and that Miss Lynes, with her lethargic temperament and thick waist, might, after all, be the best sort of thing to possess as a wife!

'Don't you wish to shake hands with me, Mr. Peel? Very well, we

will part without shaking hands, then. Esther, you will help me to carry away a portion of my own property, won't you? I am really ashamed to have kept you waiting so long.'

'Jane!' he exclaimed, as she moved towards the door, and the reality came full upon him that he was losing her—had at this very moment lost her for ever, 'don't go yet. Say a friendly word or two first. When we meet for the future, you don't intend we should be perfect strangers, do you?'

'Perfect strangers,' answered Miss Dashwood. 'Strangers in the fullest acceptance of the word. I do not intend to know Miss Lynes, and consequently I shall be unable to know you. This is as much a parting as if you or I were destined to die to-night.'

She hesitated a moment—Esther Fleming had discreetly gone on alone—then she turned: she rushed back to him, flung her arms up once more round his neck, covered his face with kisses, and left him!

They were the last kisses of passionate love that any woman's lips should give to Arthur Peel while he lived. Such things are very rare, you know; can't be bought, can't be commanded; only come at the very rare crises—once or twice, say—in a man's life!

And this was such a crisis. It was, as Miss Dashwood had said, as irrevocable a separation as though one of them had died that night. When she next met Arthur Peel again, a day or two afterwards, in Miss Lynes' company, she looked him straight between the eyes, and cut him without a pang.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

'WHEN THE RAIN IS ON THE ROOF.'

But though she kept up bravely, shielded away every mark of suffering—not from the world alone, *that* had been easy, but from those immediately around her—Jane Dashwood went through a very 'hell of time' during the first days succeeding that visit of hers to Arthur.

At first, of course, she fell into

the common error of temperaments like hers; thought she would be utterly changed at once; that after the great shock of parting all her old self, all her old passionate love must be dead—swept away for ever. Then, the first excitement over, came the common surprise at finding how very little of herself was indeed gone; how cruelly, constantly Arthur's face haunted her still; how dull and tasteless were her days without the delicious intoxication of his flatteries and his love.

'He would never, never love her any more!' She had broken with him; had offered him the last deadly affront of cutting him in the presence of Miss Lynes; and pride and reason, and a sense not wholly perverted of honour, all cried out that it was for her good that they should meet no longer, should become as strangers in each other's presence. And yet still was this the bitter outcry of Miss Dashwood's heart: 'He would never love her any more!' She knew well (not theoretically, but by that combination of worldly experience and natural instinct which supplies reason in her sex) that this *was* the case; and she was right. A judgment sharper than all that moralists hold over our heads lies in the simple, natural, or physical law, that while men may, and do return to a neglected duty or sullied legitimate love, no fire will ever rekindle the ashes once burnt out of a passion without affection—a passion such as Arthur Peel's had been for Jane. 'He would never love her any more.' She knew it, and her heart literally sickened under the blow. Something of the reality and awfulness of life—of life as it must be when love and playing at love, and when youth, and admiration, and beauty should be past—overcame her. She went out as usual; she drove, she rode, she danced, dressed, flirted; but a dull, dark weight lay for more than a fortnight upon her brain; and the first object—poor little Jane!—upon which anything like light rested, was the vision of Oliver's far-off handsome face.

She felt nothing; no one spark of the passion of love for him, either then or afterwards. But I have already remarked to you that she belonged to that enormously large section of women whose first instinct, after disappointment in love, is to nominate a successor; and I think myself it showed a great deal of natural right-heartedness in her, that, after so fierce a revolution, the legitimate heir did quietly take the empty place, and not an alien. It was not from worldly wisdom; it was not from absence of temptation. Simply and truly, as much of regard as Jane could now bring to any man, she gave to Feltham in this first revulsion of feeling. And she never changed again.

Women whom circumstances early render passionless, become very honest, or very much indeed the reverse. Jane was one of the first class: her nature, in spite of all education, *was* a pure one. She could have committed any amount of folly—of wickedness, if you will—when she loved. Love gone, all her great capabilities were gone too. She has, at this present time, her diamonds—for, surely, it doesn't take away your interest to forestal the catastrophe by forty or more pages, and tell you boldly that she and Lord Feltham are married—diamonds, emeralds, carriages, box at the opera, hosts of friends, and two little children. She is not at all callous to money and the enjoyment money brings; she is fonder than most fashionable young mothers of her children; she doesn't flirt much; she likes Feltham pretty well. She leads the usual life that most of us lead, in short; and attends church, and performs regular duties as sedulously as that little arch-hypocrite her sister Milly. But, to me, Lady Feltham's life is always one about which an infinite pathos rests. For, deep down, buried away under the cumbrous burden of all her prosperity and all her virtue, I know what skeleton lies yet un mouldered!

We pity, in fiction, a conscience laden by one overwhelming guilt, like Eugene Aram's, but it seldom occurs to us to speculate as to how

many of our intimate friends may deserve far tenderer pity—women especially. Among all the successful people of your acquaintance, how many, do you suppose, are not haunted by the thought of some murder, or, at all events, justifiable homicide, to which, during some of the stages of their upward career, they were accessory? For some it was honour that had to be put out of the way; for some, youth; for some only love;—and unimportant, from a commercial point of view, though love may be, I think its ghost walks longest.

After thirty, Lady Feltham, beyond doubt, will see how well her life has turned out for her; and she will flirt, perhaps, rather more, and take greater interest in her dress, and like to go oftener to Paris than she does now: and then she will certainly interest me no longer.

But she is a great many years from thirty now. And if you watch her narrowly at the Opera, you may note her lip quiver when Arthur Peel's face first appears beside that of Madame Z—— in the accustomed stage-box (for Miss Lynes has quite failed in rendering him domestic); and she keeps, but never wears, the little bracelet he first gave her: and when 'the rain is on the roof,' and she stands, at times, and watches her children in their sleep—little lads, both of them with the true Carew face—tears come in her eyes that shouldn't come there, looking at so fair a sight.

'Lady Feltham has really turned out wonderfully!' say her discriminating friends. 'Who would ever have expected to see her so well-conducted after the mad way she used to run after that scapegrace, Arthur Peel?'

And the astutest of them all has never guessed *what* talisman it is that holds Lady Feltham's frozen heart in safety!

CHAPTER XL.

BY FIRELIGHT.

Lord Feltham was recalled, and the *troupeau* proceeded—indeed, it was a daily occurrence for Miss

Lynes and Miss Dashwood to ignore each other's presence, as they gave mutual bridal commands at Howell and James', and Elise's; and every one thought Miss Dashwood looking so well—('spirits completely forced, my dear! how can it be otherwise, after all she's gone through in that foolish love-affair of hers?')—and the bridesmaids were engaged, and all but the wedding-day was fixed.

And still, while the marriage in which no love was, approached and throve; the love in which was no marriage, grew daily more hopeless and more strong, as is the custom in such things. Three weeks after Mrs. Strangways' party, Esther Fleming knew that Paul Chichester's presence had become her life; his absence her worse than death; knew—honest, ignorant Huron as she was!—that, but to brighten or in any way better the lot of this one poor and suspected, and little-thought of man she would rapturously sacrifice every prospect, hope, possibility of other happiness in her own.

Chance had thrown Paul and her, together, in the way that it generally does throw together any two people who would be better kept apart. With Mrs. Scott in the house, any young woman holding a dependent position would, you may feel very sure, have been well shielded from all danger or temptation of love. But only the second day after Esther's meeting with Paul, Mrs. Scott bethought herself to have fainting-fits; and Marny, in his nervous anxiety—for there are responsibilities which render fools and philosophers alike akin and helpless—rushed off for the family-surgeon; and the family-surgeon (who was just going to give his attendance for a month, at a hundred guineas a week, to Sir Levy Leontifore, at Brighton) said nothing would save Mrs. Scott, or the expected heir, save the Brighton climate. And so to Brighton it was promptly decided Mrs. Scott must go.

But it would kill her, she averred, to take Natty. Natty's screams pierced her head: Natty's temper shattered her nerves: and, besides,

what would become of the servants, unless Miss Fleming was left to look after them?

Jane and Mrs. Dashwood disliked each other so cordially, that it was out of the question to think of their both going to Brighton at the same time—for although she was only her stepmother, and although she didn't like her, and though Marmy detested her, and though Mrs. Dashwood had never had any but spiritual experiences in her life—you know Millicent Scott too well, I hope, to think that she would have outraged society by not having 'Mamma' with her at this epoch. Besides, Jane must stop in town and look after her *trousseau*, if the wedding really was to be in April; and what would Jane do without Miss Fleming for a companion? Marmy was, by these arguments, reduced to seeing himself in the light of a brute and a fool for having ever wished that Natty should have a few weeks of sea-air; and Esther Fleming was left the possessor of the most absolute and, at this particular season of her life, the most dangerous freedom.

She was upright to the core; but she was very human, and had all the temptations that go with strong impulses and strong affections. And early spring was coming on, and she knew that it did Natty no harm—nay, that it unfroze the little old prematurely-hardened heart to let her roam abroad in Kensington Gardens, or where they would, with Polly the nurse-girl, during the two fading twilight hours of these mild March days. That Paul Chichester came two, three, gradually four times a week at this hour; that Jane was almost always from home when he came; that she looked, that she longed for his coming; that day by day, even if their words grew colder, their eyes were reading to each other page after page of the old forbidden story. Could she help all this?

She said she could not; and to Miss Dashwood, and even to herself, employed much subtle casuistry whenever the peril of these visits was brought too prominently before her reason. Mr. Chichester came

simply because her grave, sober life was in accord with his, and that they could talk of subjects in which each had the same kind of interest. Talk?—why, of what did they talk? Of nonsense—of sentiment? Never. They discussed upon abstract subjects; upon the harder duties of life; upon books. Often the greater part of the visit would be consumed in Mr. Chichester taking up book after book from the drawing-room table, and descanting upon portions of their contents to her. 'And if it happens to be poetry, Jane—Shakespeare it generally is—he somehow always chooses descriptions of scenery, or friendship, or—something of that kind!' No doubt, now she came to reflect on it, this was what Paul Chichester did come so often for. He liked reading aloud; and she—well, she thought it very improving for a young person who meant to be a teacher, to educate her ear and cadence by listening to so good a reader.

Men of a somewhat washy nature do occasionally feel the mere sentiment of love: men of robust fibre know as much as is to be known of the mere passion. But the union of the two—of purest, tenderest sentiment, of intense, vital, earthly passion; the perfect blending of affection and desire, of heart and brain, of soul and sense—is never found, I have no hesitation whatever in hazarding the opinion, save in a woman's heart, and not in more than one out of one thousand of these.

Poor Esther was of the salt of the earth. Her affections large; her brain large; her physique unexceptionable; her whole life purely nurtured. Just how we can imagine—when our imagination chances to be very vivid—that women were once intended to love men, she loved Paul. She felt herself not his inferior, although so different in mind, and yet she yearned to be his slave! She had none of the little jealousy about her own intellect that she had felt in the earlier stages of their intimacy. She liked to talk well when she talked with him. She liked sometimes to be able to differ from him; even to bring him round to

her opinion. And then, in the middle of some discussion—perhaps on the origin of evil; they were fond of choosing this new and easily settled subject—she would see that the poor fellow's shirt lacked a button, or his threadbare coat a stitch, and all her heart would go out to him with love; that warm, wide, woman's love that ever seems to me to have something of maternity in its element; and the intense, passionate, despairing wish that she had the right to minister to all the little common wants, so evidently neglected now, of his life.

Such a friendship can never remain friendship long. You may read descriptions of Platonic attachment, descriptions of scenery and friendship written by Shakspeare or any other poet; you may investigate the origin of evil; may speak in measured voices; may shake each other's hands with icy shortness at going and coming. Nature will assert herself still. When the trees are full of sap in April, it is but the accident of one sudden morning's heat that is needed to clothe the yet cold branches with the life and colour of the spring.

One afternoon, they had spent three hours together as usual; and, the child not having returned, and the dull March twilight having almost become darkness, they had taken, for no reason that I can assign, to standing one on each side of the hearth—although the weather was far from chilly—and speaking scarcely a word. Of late Esther had avoided all such silence, flying instantly to the commonest and most obvious subterfuge—the weather, Natty's lessons, Jane Dashwood's *trousseau*—the instant that she felt one of these insidious but deadly dangers to be coming on. But in all natural processes—one of which I hold the passion of love to be—you pass into new developments as completely without volition or consciousness of your own as the caterpillar changes into the chrysalis, the chrysalis into the butterfly. Miss Fleming had gone through the stage of sudden silences—through the stage of feeling their danger, through the stage of talking about

things for which she cared nothing, to avert that danger. This afternoon her condition had progressed by one more step. She knew that they were both silent, that such silence was dangerous, that the danger could be averted, temporarily, by conversation of any kind; and she attempted conversation of no kind! Only stood, with cold, clasped hands, and perfectly rigid stiffness, and knew that Paul's eyes scarcely left her face a moment, and that she could feel—could almost hear—every sickening, distinct beat of her own feverish heart.

It was decidedly another step: another, and very nearly the last. I know of only two possible further developments for love that has become passion and that has ceased to struggle. Only two: and the story of nearly all our lives can be written in this very short sentence: possession, or an irrevocable severance; no return along that road whose upward transit was so sweet; no return to the pleasant resting-places, the tranquil hours, the dreams—better than all fruition—of that delicious pilgrimage. Love that has become passion and that has ceased to struggle must end in one of these two—possession or severance.

And in either, broadly speaking, love dies. And love is human youth, and human hope, and human happiness: all that, during the brightest years, at least, of our existence we sum up whenever the word 'life' is on our lips.

Paul was the first to speak. He chose for his subject one concerning which he had never spoken to her before—Lord Feltham's character.

'No; I shall not be able to see you so often after his return, Miss Fleming. Jane Dashwood has told you, of course, upon what terms I stand with my mother's family?'

'She has told me that you and your brother do not meet, Mr. Chichester; and I think no better of you for allowing such an estrangement to exist. What can there be in Lord Feltham to make you cherish such a bitter feeling after so many years?'

'In Feltham himself, nothing.'

'You admire your brother's character, then?'

'No; but I dare say he is 'quite as good a fellow as circumstances have let him be. He is weak and unambitious, doubtless; but what can you expect from a man whom fortune places at the winning-post without the trouble of the race, who has never had the slightest training, either by disappointment or any other kind of moral discipline?'

'I think a man's own nature should make him strong,' Esther answered, promptly; for even yet she had not wholly outlived her bitterness against poor Oliver. 'I don't think a man should need training of an especial kind to bring out the common qualities of manliness and honesty in his heart.'

'Easily said, Miss Fleming; but, depend upon it, continued worship and flattery from nurses, tutors, companions, the whole world, from one's cradle to one's dotage, are perils that may warp any but the noblest natural character, and that Feltham never had. From what I remember of him as a child, I should say he will get on excellently well in the position to which it has pleased God to call him, and will make Miss Dashwood quite as happy as she deserves.'

'Oh, no doubt, no doubt,' said Esther, hastily. 'It is not in Lord Feltham to feel any very high or exalted sentiment.'

'Miss Fleming, do you know my brother?'

She had never meant to tell him or any other creature living of her engagement to Oliver; but during the last few days a strong impulse had been upon her to let Paul Chichester know everything that her life had to tell. Not, God knows! from forwardness, from any hope of gaining him in marriage: did she not know *that* to be hopeless? but rather from a despairing, instinctive sense that a great crisis—the crisis of parting—was coming on; a desire that as much of her as any man should ever possess—all the history of her poor foolish life, should be given to him before that hour came. This, and, perhaps, with the sublime

inconsistency of love, the latent hope that it would, it 'must, touch him to know how willingly she had given up rank and wealth and position where she herself could not give love in return.

'I have known your brother. I have known him very well.' And then, in broken sentences, as you may believe, with hesitation, with need of frequent questioning from her companion, all the story was told.

As she faltered out the last words of her confession, she took courage and looked up into Paul's face. The firelight shone upon it full: she could not, she could *not* be mistaken in what she read there. Never during these three weeks had one quiver of a muscle, one flush, one pallor on that determined face given her even a moment's respite from reason; but now—no, she was not mistaken—all Paul Chichester's face was soft as she had never seen it before; only as in dreams her fancy had so often cruelly shown it to her. The hardness had gone from his mouth, the lines from his brow: not alone his expression, his very features seemed changed—*younger, handsomer, fuller of life.*

'You never loved him, Esther? Tell me perfectly, honestly.'

'If I had, I shouldn't have changed, Mr. Chichester. I am not a woman to love more than once while I live.'

And then she shrank back fearfully, and turned her face quite away from him towards the fire.

Paul Chichester looked at her drooping profile, and knew that she was his—his now, his always; yes, whatever should hereafter divorce them, whatever man should some day call her wife. He did not love her as she loved him. Men don't feel strong, blind, reasonless passion for women of poor Esther's worth; but he knew that to possess her for his companion would be to raise his darkened existence into vivid, healthy life; he knew (and this to a man is a great deal more than any love of his own) that she worshipped him; that for the freedom hopelessly to worship, she had given up the position and money and youth that

his brother had to bestow upon her. And, noble though Paul's heart was to the core, he was not at all super-human in his nobility. The wealth, the position of his alienated family had been bitter drops in his cup; and it *was* sweet, yes, sweeter than pure unmixed love itself, to know that for him, poor, friendless, out-cast, a woman like Esther Fleming had thrown their wealth aside as worthless dross.

And as he felt all this, and as he looked at her pure and steadfast face, and as he yearned to go to her and clasp her to his breast and bid her stay there, a cold whisper shuddered in his ears, a white face rose before him, and one terrible word—a word it was not in him to disobey—rang through every fibre of his heart—*duty!* Duty, with which no inclination went hand-in-hand. Duty, not to a woman possessing youth and strength and beauty, like this one, but to a poor, bereft, forsaken creature, whose life, by hardest fate, must be bound horribly close to his, and yet whole dreary worlds apart, so long as they both should live.

Rigidly just natures are prone, by virtue of their very consistency, to fall into injustice. We don't stop still, such persons fail to remember; we live. If we were in the position of bricks, well imbedded by mortar in a stone wall, an action right for us once must be right ten years later, twenty years later, always. But, instead of stopping, we not only live but change in our own natures, just as much as in the outward circumstances of our lot. Thus, a really noble action, an impulse straight from the heart of a lad of twenty, will, if carried out through ten or fifteen years of life, most probably degenerate into persistent folly, or, which is worse, mechanical, outside ceremonial, without the faintest reason or necessity for its fulfilment. At twenty, Paul's heart had revolted against what he considered the inhumanity of cold, worldly sense; and it was heroic of him then to take up the position he did. At thirty, his life had narrowed and narrowed under the dead pressure of one self-inflicted duty,

until he had quite forgotten to ask himself if this indeed *was* justice? If his own body and soul had no real claim upon him? if duty might not now consist in breaking free from the trammels in which for ten long years he had walked with bleeding, but as yet unflinching feet?

I say, no light of the kind had as yet dawned across the one fixed purpose of Paul's life. If it was ever to do so, now was the last moment when he would have given it admittance. He might alter deliberately, through reason—never swerve in a moment of sudden temptation or sudden passion.

'You can only love once in your life? A mistake, child, a great mistake. When you have lived longer, when you have felt more, you will know how wonderfully elastic your heart is, above all, in its capacities for suffering. We have never quite done with any hope or any misery until we die. A year ago I thought, honestly, I should never know anything more about human love of any kind while I lived, and now—'

He stopped himself short; then he came suddenly closer; he put his arm half round, but yet not clasping, her shrinking figure as she stood neither daring to answer nor to look into his face.

'Esther, I won't deny to you that I have felt pleasure in hearing that you wouldn't marry Oliver, in spite of all the worldly advantages he had to offer you. I don't, I can't be blind, child, to your kindly liking for me. Esther, you're the only woman I ever desired to possess as my wife. If I was free to do so, I would give up my life to make you happy; but I am not free—I never shall be—and I feel to-night that I am not safe in coming any more to see you like this. I thought, three weeks ago, I should be,' he went on hurriedly, for at this juncture something very like a stifled sob broke from Miss Fleming's lips. 'I thought I was stronger than I am, and that I could bear to look in your face, and listen to your voice; and know that now and for ever I must be no more than a stranger to you. I find that

I cannot do so; and I had best stay away from you till my folly is cured. Esther, will you forgive me?"

For a minute pride, wounded vanity, resentment, stirred in her breast; and she looked at him coldly, and drew away from the cruel, mocking temptation of his half-embrace. Then a love, mightier than all pride or vanity or resentment, ebbed back, with a sudden rush, across that generous heart. She clasped hold of the hand he offered her; she looked straight into his eyes. 'I've nothing to forgive, Mr. Chichester. You have made me happy by what you said—I never hoped for any more. And

don't stay away for ever, please. I mean—I mean I don't think I could bear it if I thought you and I wouldn't be friends as long as we live!"

It was a love stronger than death, the love of this poor, untutored, country girl.

As Paul Chichester walked away from the house that night, the image of her faithful face, the sound of her pleading voice, haunted him with a strange sense of self-reproach; and then, for the first time these ten years, the possibility of his own freedom, of his own return with honour to life and love, did flash, dimly and indistinctly as yet, across his mind.

A NOVEMBER MEMORY.

FIVE P.M. ! The foggy evening closes round the noisy street, Where the lamps are faintly gleaming, and the tramp of many feet Echoes through the old Inn's archway and throughout the silent square, Where I smoke in lonely chambers, keeping out the chilly air By a fire whose fitful blazes leap upon the window-pane, And then, sinking into glimmers, leave me in the gloom again.

Cold November ! though I bear thee in the body here in town, Yet in spirit I behold thee far away where, sloping down, Girt by beeches and by poplars waving leaflessly and free, Lies a lawn of greenest velvet stretching out towards the sea, Till it ends upon the threshold of the shell-strewed yellow bar, Where the waves come nightly rolling in beneath the vesper star.

And there was a bleak November I can call before my mind ; (Ah ! what memories all-chequered in those little words I find !)
When the north-wind howled in fury o'er the bare and barren beach,
Hurling heavy drifts of seaweed far beyond the water's reach,
While the broken waves came crashing—sheets of foam—upon the shore ;
In their sombre echoes saying words remembered evermore.

One was with me who is limned upon my brain in vivid guise ;
(Pshaw ! how tiresome 'tis these smoke-wreaths bring the water to my eyes !)
Wrapped in folds of glossy seal-skin, and her hat pulled tightly down
O'er the forehead, till the pressure made the arch'd eyebrows frown ;
With the pink cheek turned to crimson by the beating of the breeze,
And the silky braids all gleaming with the rain-drops from the trees.

And a soft hand clasped my fingers, and a voice of silver tone,
Answered to my passioned pleading that the heart I sought to own
Was already mine. I read it surely, swiftly in the light
Of the lovely eyes irradiant with a lustre softly bright ;
Eyes whose glitter was the shining of my changed existence' star ;
Eyes which even now, perchance, are gazing at me from afar.

* * * * *

And the next November I was looking sadly from the land,
But alone: no loving fingers twined around my weary hand;
And the spray from every billow filled my eyes with stinging smart;
But no other eyes were glancing with the love of soul and heart.
And I murmured in my sorrow words of bitter aching pain;
But the voice that once had spoken never more would speak again!

Dead!—my darling! As the rosebud withered on the tender spray;
Dead!—the sweet, sweet life of hoping faded noiselessly away;
Dead!—the wealth of love that promised me an age of precious bliss!
All summed up at last and given in the faint and dying kiss,
That the pale lips calmly gave me with their sobbing catching breath,
Ere their lines of beauty settled in the awful calm of Death.

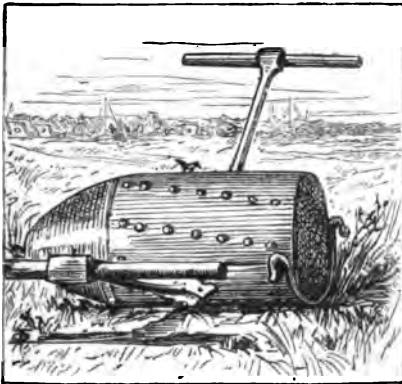
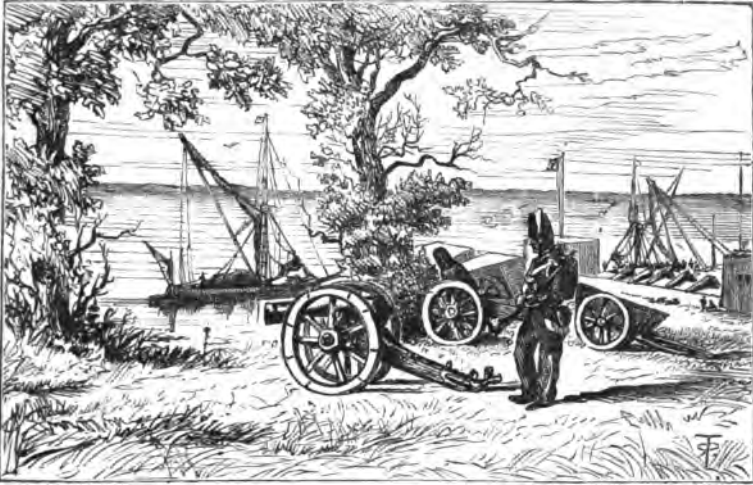
* * * *

Ayle me! Though years have vanished, yet that memory remains
Of the doom of cruel November, and its sorrow never wanes.
Though I hide it from the prying, tattling whisper of the world,
Yet I know that all my fondest hopes of happiness were hurled
Down to dust when *She* was taken. But the wound must be concealed:
Men have parts to play, and therefore hearts and minds must both be
steeled.

W. B.



SHOEBURYNESS, AND THE BIG GUNS.



HE very mention of Shoebury-ness suggests all kind of combustibles:—heavy charges of powder—high velocities—ballistic pendulums of the past—Navez's electrical instrument of the present—big plates of Old England—small plates of France—'Big Will'—Sir William Armstrong—monster tickler—Whitworth's ship rib-roaster with hexagonal shells—Lancaster's oval cannon which hurled forth the 'Whistling Dicks' of the Crimea; the pioneer in 1854 of rifled artillery and all the sisterhood, as guns are always feminine.

We have, too, Lynell Thomas—the persevering Commander Scott—rockets. Hale and Stout—mortars, bombs, and cohorns; and wind up with all the offensive and defensive iguanadons and ichthyosauri of modern war. But of these hereafter. Having come to see Shoebury in its entirety you should know that its antecedents are interesting. Less than twenty years ago, Shoebury was a sandy waste, with its long sands running out at low water to an immense distance—a pleasant recreation ground for gulls, sea-birds, crabs, and crustacea; and, not to slight the vegetable world, we would mention the horrors of marine stinging nettles which make bathers tingle again, and for some time afterwards. But the site is one of antiquarian interest. The derivation of the present name is taken from the early period of the Danish settlements of which SCHU BERG (NESS) was the first. Danish entrenchments are still visible and traceable on the east side—the line crossing the government property close by the powder magazine. The camp had in old times been accessible to the Danish

galleys by the Swin, and a passage of water still winds up through the sands to the same spot to the remains of the fortifications. A small, old-fashioned house, now used as the office of the Royal Engineers, was originally known as Shoebury Hall, and its dignity is still recognised by its establishing a right of way through the grounds in spite of its being the government property—a privilege which our continental neighbours would not long tolerate. It is a credit certainly to the tight little island in which we live that the freedom and convenience of the subject is so much considered. Shoebury is not easy of access. Accustomed as we are now-a-days to have stations at every visitable place—to Southend by railway is the first step, thence by fly about five miles, or three and a half by the beach. We will go by the latter, passing through the lower part of Southend. We leave the town, and much to our satisfaction, a parish ditch, which is enough to typhoidise any man, woman, or child, except an *habitué* of this 'charming locale.' Past the tea and shrimp invitation boards, we start along the upper part of a bank covered with most luxuriant weeds, grasses, and wild flowers innumerable. Passing under the coastguard station we come upon sandy, rabbit soil, which ushers into the practice ground. By this time passing the black boundary, we come to the palings of the 'sacred ground,' as a big-gun enthusiast once termed it, and now more rabbits than ever. Why are cannon and rabbits so intimately associated? For at Woolwich the rabbit warren is the place where the guns are stored. Keeping the upper bank, we leave on our left the *débris* of the iron-plate strife and the targets, and pass a basin for pontoons where Canadian, Uphir, Belgian, and other bridges are constructed, and artillery officers work in their long course of shirt-sleeve labour. On our right are the sands over which we look to the Nore Light, the Isle of Thanet, and Sheerness: along these is an unlimited range—10,000 yards if required. The general appearance

at first suggests rather the idea of a marine gymnasium, for there are long lines of pegs vanishing to nothingness, tall poles for initial velocities and the register of trajectories—endless targets ever changing in form and position. Sea-horses literally, or amphibious horses, move about with target-carriages, and the water orderlies ride in sea boots, white suits, and white covers to their caps to keep off the glare of the sun—looking more like sun-baked Indians than anything else. But as there is nothing perfect in this world, and well adapted as Shoebury is for artillery practice, yet there is a troublesome brick-field close by. Barges will moor from necessity or some other equally disagreeable cause, and stop for a time the experiments, in spite of a new Act of Parliament by which they are rendered liable to fines.

Whilst we are patiently sitting down, let us look at some of the common objects on the sea-shore at Shoebury. We approach the jetty, alongside which the lighters land the big guns, carriages, ammunition and heavy projectiles from the arsenals and dockyards. Our attention is at once arrested by a leviathan in repose. We show it in a sketch. The shell shown here is the 600-pounder, the body of steel, with studs to fit the rifling, the head of cast iron. The shot are recovered at low water and collected on the shore, previous to being returned to Woolwich. The long shot in the foreground shows the cannellures into which the Armstrong lead coating fits, but which in this case has been ripped off. It was described to us a few days since by a little child as 'looking very fat and rather nicky-looking.' Dark against the horizon this huge six-slided opera-glass-looking 600-pounder peacefully rests, a triumph of iron manufacture and science, but at the same time, ugliness personified. The beautiful and elegant lines of the old ordnance are past, and beauty of form swept away before the necessity for practical stability and matter-of-fact strength. Placed on a carriage weighing 54 cwt, the

gun recoils upon a platform weighing 75 cwt., its own weight and dimensions being as follows:—

Length	15 ft. 3 in.
Weight	22 tons 18 cwt.
Breadth of breech	4 ft. 3½ in.
Bore	13½ in.
Charge	70 lbs. powder.
Rifling, number of grooves	{ 10 grooves and
	shunt. :
Width over trunnions. .	6 ft. 2½ in.

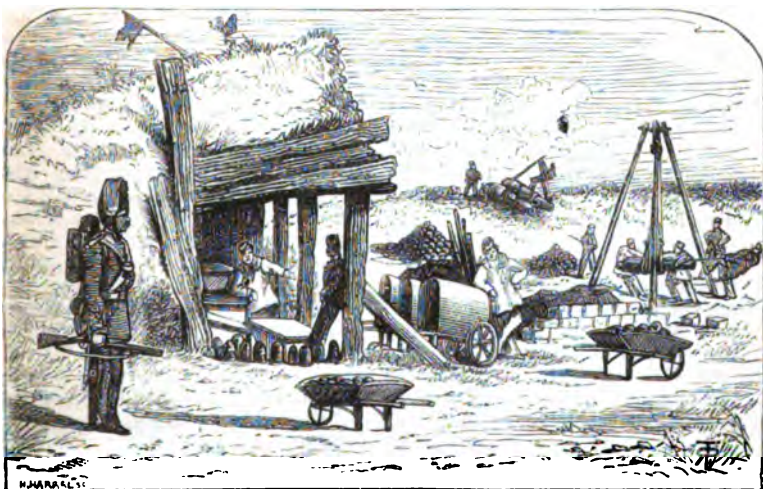
The gun is built up of eight layers of coiled cylinders—barrel inclusive. Total weight 22 tons 18 cwt.

The segment shell fired from it contains 510 segments of 6 oz. each, and the steel shell carries a bursting charge of 24 lbs., which is covered by a hollow cast iron head in front, in order that the powder may take effect forward after piercing through the iron plates.

The figures of the gunners working this monster seem very small, but the very tompion which stops up the muzzle reminds one of the cover of a water butt.

The initial letter at the com-

mencement of the article shows the cradle in which the projectile is raised to the muzzle of the gun and hooked on, which done, the studs are ready in position to run into the grooves and be rammed home. The 70 lbs. charge leads one to expect a great crash; but although every one must be struck with the tremendous boom of its fire, yet it is not proportionately great compared with the smart crack of the old 3 and 6-pounder brass guns which generally make the ears of No. 2 tingle smartly. But how one longs oneself to hear the lion 'roar his dreadful thunder.' How can the giant be worked—the projectiles so massive—how can they be adjusted to the studs to take the grooves without damaging the latter? Of course, as this is only an experimental gun, the time now taken to load is longer than if the regular working gear were arranged and organised for service; necessarily the time now taken to load is comparatively long. At present a gin, or triangle, is



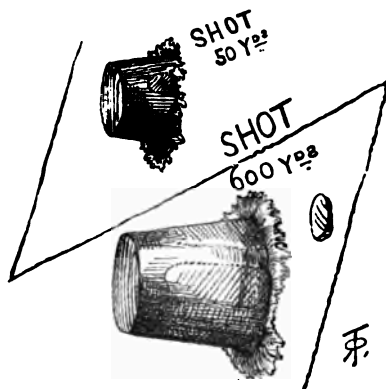
placed at the muzzle of the gun, and the shot, placed in the cradle, already shown in the initial letter, is hoisted up and hooked on the muzzle ready for ramming home, then to come down upon a cartridge which may be described as a perfect bolster carried on a man's shoulder (see figure in large cut). Strange

contrast to the careful way in which No. 7 covers up the insignificant 1 lb. 5 oz. charge of a 6-pounder, and runs from the limber up to the gun. The first time of seeing 'Big Will' fired is certainly a red-letter day in our gunnery calendar. 'Ready, sir,' was soon heard from the officer in command to the com-

mandant, and every one rushed to a favourable place to windward, careful at the same time, for the sake of one's ears, not to stand broadside on to the monster reporter of the day—about twenty yards is a respectable arm's length. Soon the word is given, Fire! The earth shakes again—the concussion is considerable, and we saw the ponderous missile puffing, grunting, and fizzing till its strength is exhausted, and a destination reached where he may lie

for generations and then be investigated by an archaeological meeting some 500 hundred years hence.

August 16th, his strength was to be tried against the Warner plates and backing; and as this material is rather expensive stuff to build up only to be knocked down and destroyed, the target was made about 12 feet square, and the velocity of the shot reduced to that of 2000 yards, by making the charge 50 lbs. instead of 70 lbs.—the target being



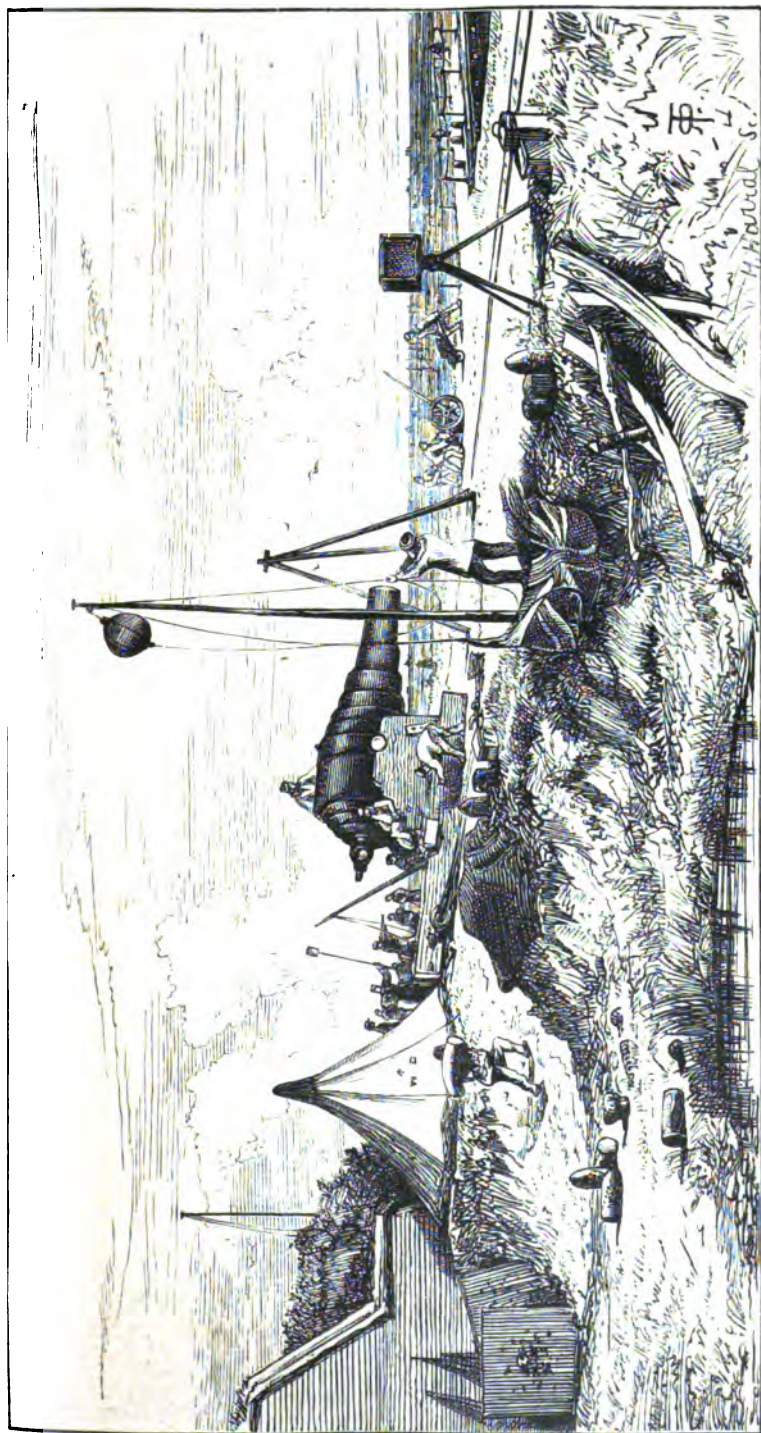
placed at 500 yards, so that the projectile should strike it with the same velocity as if it had been 2000 yards. This is a most important point to settle, as on it depends forts or no forts at Spithead. The question of penetration is the one to be settled, after that there is little doubt that at more than 4000 yards plates may be perforated. The final appliances for working huge guns, such as hydraulic power, &c., would soon be applied, the only difficulty *per contra* being, that in actual war fast steamers are not so easily hit at long ranges as stationary targets at 500 yards, and speed is after all a most important element, and one more baffling to any antagonist.

The next space beyond the Shears is used for the field-artillery, 9 and 12 practice, 1000, 1500, and 2000 yards being their ranges. Behind them, on the left, are the mortars, which are not fired at targets, but at a certain area marked off by bannerets, into which the shell is thrown; and most beautiful is the curve described by the shell in its flight. To

trace it well one should be a little out of line with the mortar.

A few yards beyond the light guns are some experimental platforms, where a new carriage was being tried, and the gun much depressed to try the working of the carriage in firing from the bank. The shot strikes the water some 50 yards from the muzzle; the water rises in an immense volume far finer than the *Grandes Eaux de Versailles*, and falling in spray, spoon drift, and mist, forms a rainbow cloud of the greatest intensity of prismatic colouring, the shot in rising from the water generally ricocheting about 1000 yards. I dare say the heart of many a barge-man has quaked from the unexpected proximity of some of these erratic spheres.

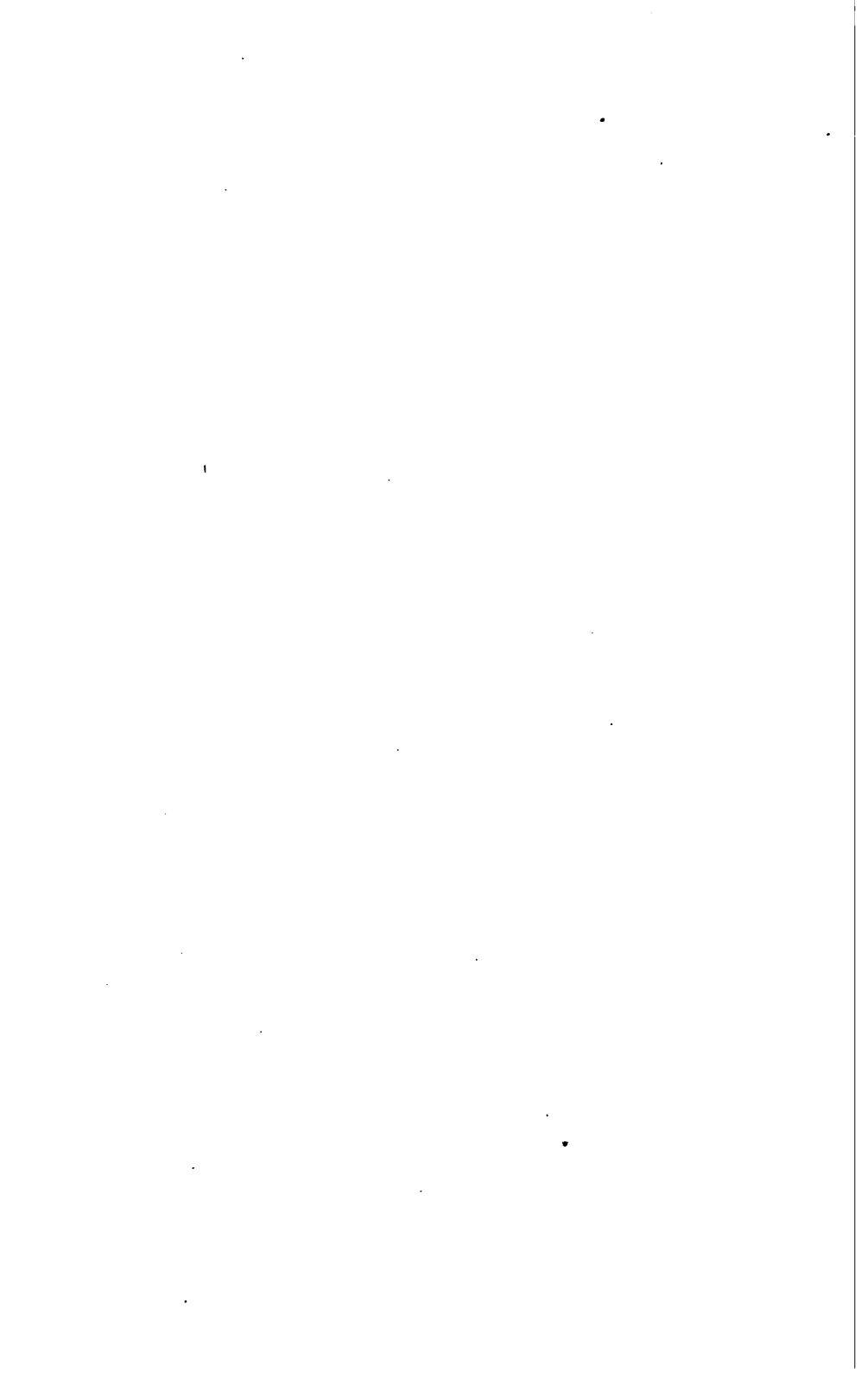
We now approach a sentry. Another jetty, and we come on a sentry who has strict orders not to allow any one to touch the projectiles piled up on either side, these being intended for the now pending competitive trials of Armstrong and



Drawn by R. T. Pritchett.]

"BIG WILL."

[See "Shooburyne and the Big Gun."



Whitworth. The Whitworth are all on the hexagonal system, and those of Armstrong of the shunt and lead-coated formation. The comparative durability of these guns is one of the principal objects now being tested.

We are now at a breastwork, where several 110-pounders are mounted. There is a snug safety-box on either side for watching the effect of shot. Here we find Hall's rockets being fired,—and fearful things they are. The rush with which they start, with a sound like tearing calico on a large scale, the fiery train and smoke in which we lose sight of them, are all things not easily forgotten. When they burst, they leave a black train of smoke, and, at the same time, tear up the water by the pole at which they are fired, and towards which they are levelled on a conducting tube placed at an angle to suit their range. Turning to the left we come upon the store or museum of experiment in projectiles, where they are stored up for instruction and reference in every form of smash, crash, and dash; some in their normal state; some having struck iron plates, through iron plates, and into iron plates; some, too, the effusions of the well-intentioned, that never even got so far as being entertained by the committee or any one else save the energetic inventor. The large square now before us has a convenient suite of offices for the commandant, brigade-major and staff, and a photographic department, a branch now so desirable as a faithful reporter of facts and results to those not present at the time.

The remaining part is composed of a park of artillery, sheds for guns, magazines, and by-gones of artillery; stepping-stone efforts which have cost much private and public money, but which have brought us up to the present, and placed us well, we hope, for the future.

The remaining part of the government property is devoted to the quarters of officers and barracks; and, curiously enough, there is no racquet-court, the usual accompaniment to all artillery barracks. Leaving the officers' quarters on our left, with the mess-room, reading-room,

&c., we come upon the engineers' offices already alluded to, with the commandant's house lying back. Beyond it is a gymnasium, lecture-room, and a very fine drill house for big guns, 190 feet long; and most interesting it is to see the men manning the naval breech-loaders, the 7-inch naval, the garrison guns for breast-work and for casemates, 40-pounders breech-loaders for field service, with all their appliances.

This is a very stirring sight, and one cannot see it without wishing to join them, reminding one of days on board the old 'Excellent,' and almost wishing, with the excited volunteer in 'Punch,' that one could only put in ball-cartridge.

We have now only to pass more barracks. We arrive at the brick-field, where barges stop the practice occasionally, and turning round, work back by the target-ground. Hitherto we have seen the offensive, now we come to the 'Protectorate,' and sad colanders they look.

The principal promoters of iron-clads and targets which part sides of vessels, built up, are:—

Fairbairn	The Lord Warden,
Scott Russell	Warrior,
Clarke	La Gloire (French).

and are generally large-plate men, say 20 feet \times 3 feet 6 inches. The foreigners are small-plate men, 2 feet 5 inches \times 5 feet 10 inches; and to judge from the last riddle-target of 'La Gloire' model, composed of 6-inch wrought-iron plate, then 10-inch oak, horizontal in grain, 11-inch vertical, and 6-inch horizontal; in all, 27 inches of oak behind the 6-inch plate, the large plates carry the palm, and have greater stability and strength. In the 16th century, the armour of knights was gradually made heavier and heavier, till at last they could hardly move in their iron-clad prisons, and gradually left it off as powder weapons improved. It would be a curious repetition if the very heavy ship armour met the same fate.

The 'Warrior' plates are very interesting also.

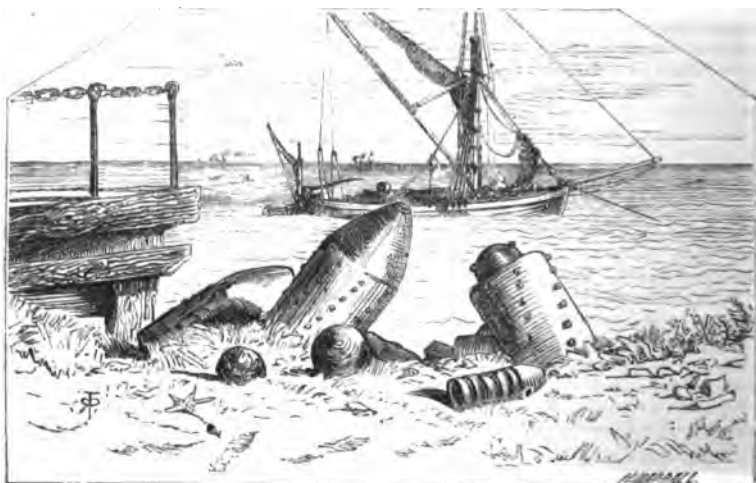
The French plates are screwed with a very long, well-made screw

into the wood. Some plates are bolted, but the concussion brings off the head. Some sceptics assert that the Shoeburyness edition of the 'Gloire' is incomplete, and requires an inner iron plate to make it a faithful representation of the French iron-clads.

Be this as it may, the fact of the '1864' experiments is this, that the guns beat the plates, and the only chance for ships lies in their speed and clever handling. The insular position of England suggests the idea of a large ship with a first-rate platform, so that, as a non-aggressive power, she is comparatively secure. It is a great credit to the Government that the Shoebury school of gunnery is the only one in the world; and all who visit it will join in testifying to the kind manner in which they are received and treated by the commandant and officers of this interesting and scientific establishment.

In quitting Shoeburyness for the present, we cannot do so without expressing our strong regret at witnessing the inadequacy of many of the arrangements for the soldier. The canteen was built (of wood) many years ago, and is so disgracefully small and bad in accommodation that the men and non-commissioned officers are *driven out* into the town pot-houses. There is no recreation-room for the men, and no

place for amusement amongst themselves. [Colonel Eardley Wilmot, with a true perception of the soldier's needs, has lately, we understand, done all that lies in his power, by the establishment of thirty-five gardens, which are eagerly sought after by the married soldiers, and are likely to do good. This is a step in the right direction; but it is evident to the attentive observer that to make the place what it ought to be, more finish and completeness in its general arrangements are desirable. A sandy terre-plein and rough-and-ready platforms, show a too evident veneration for the god 'Force' rather than the more valuable deity 'Skill.' Force is a famous fellow for skilled men learning to make use of anything at hand; but Skill is the agent in scientific experiment, and Shoeburyness contemplates both. Hence the point of our remark. Those who have fair means of judging, pay a high tribute to the very remarkable cheerfulness and willingness with which both officers and soldiers work at experiments—often for many hours after those ordinarily appropriated to 'work.' We therefore hope that at an early date the comfort and welfare of those stationed at a place of great and growing importance will receive from the authorities that attention which they so much require and so well deserve.]



THE MERCHANT PRINCES OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MYDDELTONS AND THE MIDDLETONS.



SIR HUGH MYDDELTON, FOUNDER OF THE NEW RIVER COMPANY.

THE dignity and influence of British commerce during the latter part of the sixteenth century and the early years of the seventeenth, found their foremost promoters in two illustrious families, so closely allied in name, and so like in worth of character and boldness of enterprise, that they should ever be associated in the grateful memory of Englishmen. It is more than probable that they were kindred in blood as well as in spirit; but the genealogical chain of evidence is incomplete, and each has therefore to be spoken of on its own merits. To the one belong Sir Hugh Myddelton and his brothers William and Thomas; to the other, Sir Henry Middleton and his brother David.*

All we know of the Middletons is that they were 'of Cheshire,' and laid claim

* The spelling of names was in those days arbitrary, and very much at the option of those who used them; so that members of either family were often called both Myddelton and Middleton. But for convenience of distinction we here restrict the one spelling to one family, the other to the other.

to a Welsh ancestry. The Myddeltons were also Welsh, and connected with Cheshire. A descendant of Blaydd, Lord of Penllyn, in Merionethshire, a famous warrior of the twelfth century, married the sister and heiress of Sir Alexander Myddelton, of Myddelton, in Shropshire, and, assuming his wife's name, had for great-grandson a David Myddelton, of Gwaenynog, in Denbigh, receiver of North Wales in the time of Edward IV. Of this worthy the chief thing known is, as we are told by the historian of Denbigh, that he 'paid his addresses to Elyn, daughter of Sir John Donne, of Utkinton, in Cheshire, and gained the lady's affections. But the parents preferred their relative, Richard Donne, of Croton. The marriage was accordingly celebrated; but David Myddelton watched the bridegroom leading his bride out of church, killed him on the spot, carried away his widow, and married her forthwith, so that she was maid, widow, and twice a wife in one day.' One of this David's grandsons was Richard Myddelton, of Galch Hill,

the first Member of Parliament for Denbigh in Henry VIII.'s reign, and governor of its castle under Edward VII., Mary, and Elizabeth. He died in 1575, at the age of sixty-seven, leaving behind him sixteen children, of whom four at least, William, Thomas, Hugh, and Robert, claim to be mentioned here.

William Myddelton was a friend of Raleigh's, and, like him, a sailor and an author. Born somewhere near the year 1545, he studied at Oxford, and in later days gave proof of his scholarship by translating the book of Psalms into Welsh, and writing '*Barddoniaeth, or the Art of Welsh Poetry*,' a book highly



GALCH HILL.—THE HOUSE WHERE SIR HUGH MYDDELTON IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN BORN.

thought of in its day. But at an early age the fame of such voyagers as Fro-bisher, Drake, and Hawkins enticed him to sea, and it was as a sailor that he rose to distinction. He did his share of patriotic work in the Armada fight, and in 1591, when Lord Thomas Howard led a little squadron to fight with the Spanish fleet in the West Indian seas, he was captain of one of the ships, and by his sharpness and promptitude saved the whole from destruction. His younger years seem to have been chiefly passed upon the sea, now and then on errands of commerce, but oftener in pursuit of Spanish ships of war or galleons, whose seizure served at the same time to enrich the captors and to impoverish the great enemy of England. When he was forty-eight or fifty he settled down to a quiet life in London, where he and his friends, Captain Thomas Price and Captain Koet, were wont to attract crowds of wondering *gamins*, curious to behold the first smokers of tobacco in the streets of London. He is supposed to have died at his house in Highgate, in or soon after 1603, the same year in which his younger brothers, Thomas, Hugh, and Robert, may be said to have begun their public life.

For many years before that time, however, these brothers had been prosperous tradesmen in London. Thomas, now somewhat over fifty, was a grocer in Queenhithe, influential enough to be chosen Alderman in May, 1603, to be knighted in the following July by the

new king, James I., and to take his seat in the first Parliament assembled by that monarch. Robert, a few years younger, by business a skinner, was also a member of this Parliament, in which, moreover, Hugh, representing his native town of Denbigh, had a seat. He had been apprenticed to the Goldsmiths' Company in his youth, and now had a famous shop, a favourite haunt of Sir Walter Raleigh's, in Basinghall Street, but had also spent much of his time in Denbigh. In 1597 he served it as alderman, and under that year we find him described in the town records as 'citizen and goldsmith of London, and one of the merchant adventurers of England.' Grocers, skimmers, and goldsmiths alike had a wider range of business two hundred and fifty years ago than now appertains to their callings; and all the three brothers embarked in enterprises from which most of their fellow-tradesmen held aloof.

A new significance was attaching to the old term of 'merchant adventurer.' A company of merchant adventurers had been established by Henry VII. in 1505, with the main object of trading in woollen goods with Germany and the Netherlands, and through nearly a hundred years there had been a keen and constant rivalry between its members and the foreign merchants of the Steelyard, until in 1597 the Emperor Rodolph's arbitrary shutting up of all the factories of the English merchant adventurers in Germany gave Queen

Elizabeth an excuse for abrogating all the privileges conferred by her and her predecessors on the Steelyard Company. In 1601, according to contemporary testimony, the Company of Merchant Adventurers included more than half of all the wealthy traders of London, York, Norwich, Exeter, Ipswich, Newcastle, Hull, and the other chief commercial towns. 'These of old time linked themselves together for the exercise of merchandize, by trading in cloth, kerseys, and all other—as well English as foreign—commodities, vendible abroad, whereby they brought much wealth home to their respective places of residence. Their limits are the towns and ports lying between the river of Somme, in France, and along all the coast of the Netherlands and Germany, within the German Sea; not into all at once, at each man's pleasure, but into one or two towns at most within the same bounds, which they commonly call the mart town or towns, because there only they staple their commodities and put them to sale, and thence only they bring such foreign wares as England wanteth, which are brought from far by merchants of divers nations, flocking thither to buy and sell as at a fair. The merchant adventurers do annually export at least sixty thousand white cloths, worth at least 600,000*l.*, and of coloured cloths of all sorts, kerseys, baize, cottons, northern dozens, and other coarse cloths, forty thousand more, worth 400,000*l.*, in all, one million sterling, besides what goes to the Netherlands from England of woollens, lead, tin, saffron, coney skins, leather, tallow, alabaster, corn, beer, and the like. And our company importeth of the Dutch and German merchants, wines, fustians, copper, steel, hemp, onion seed, iron and copper wire, latten, kettles, pans, linen, harness, saltpetre, gunpowder, and all things made at Nuremberg, such as toys and small iron ware; of the Italians, all sorts of silks, velvets, cloth of gold, and the like; of the Easterlings, naval stores, furs, soap, ashes, &c.; of the Portuguese, spices and drugs. With the Spanish and French they have not much to do, by reason that our English merchants have had a great trade directly to France and Spain, and to serve England directly from thence with the commodities of those two countries. Of the Netherlands they buy all kinds of manufactures, tapestry, buckrams, white thread, linen, cambrics, lawns, madder, and the like. Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, and sovereign of the Netherlands, the founder of the Order of the Fleece, gave the fleece for the badge of that Order, in

consideration of the great revenue accruing to him from the tolls and customs of our wool and woollen cloths.' That last assertion is more than doubtful, but it is true enough that the English trade in woollen and other commodities tended greatly to enrich the people of the Netherlands and Germany. In 1615 the Merchant Adventurers alone sent five-and-thirty ships to Hamburg and Middleburg, besides having a large share in the thirty sent to Dantzic, the twenty to Naples, Genoa, and other Italian towns, and the twenty to Portugal and Andalusia. In 1604 a fresh charter was given to the Company by James I., and when this was renewed in 1617, it is stated to have contained more than four thousand members of one sort or another. In 1634 it was influential enough to obtain from Charles I. a proclamation securing to it the entire woollen and cotton trade with the Continent. 'And to the end,' the edict proceeds, 'that the said trade may be hereafter reduced and continued in an orderly and well-governed course, we do hereby declare our royal pleasure to be that the said fellowship of Merchant Adventurers shall admit to the freedom of their said trade all such of our subjects dwelling in our City of London, and exercised in the profession of merchandize and no shopkeepers, except they give over their shops, as shall desire the same, for a fine of 50*l.* apiece, and those of the outposts for 25*l.* apiece.' Nor was that all. In 1643, while England was in the midst of civil war, the Company obtained from the Long Parliament a confirmation of those privileges, with the right of doubling the entry fees, on condition of their paying 30,000*l.* into the public purse.

So prosperous was the Company of which Thomas Myddelton, the grocer, Hugh Myddelton, the goldsmith, and Robert Myddelton, the skinner (tradesmen being not yet excluded from its ranks), were active members. Hugh, true to his character, seems, from the very scanty information we have on this point, to have been the more active of the three. Not sympathising with the old-fashioned and very foolish prejudice in favour of sending raw material abroad, so that foreigners might have the labour of working it up, he established a large cloth manufactory at home, and in that way, as he said in a speech before the House of Commons, enabled several hundred families to maintain themselves in comfort.

The Company of Merchant Adventurers, however, was but one, and at that time the most important, of several

kindred associations. As early as 1554 a Russia Company had been established to make use of the new branch of commerce opened up by the comrades of Sir Hugh Willoughby. In 1564 a small and unsuccessful rivalry of the Merchant Adventurers had been started by the founders of the Hamburg Company; and later in the century the extension of English trade, first along the shores of the Mediterranean, and soon in the more distant parts of the East, had given rise to several other societies of merchants. The Turkey Company began in 1581, the Morocco Company in 1585, the Guinea Company in 1588, and the East India Company, destined to become far more influential than any of the others, chiefly through the enterprise of a namesake of Hugh Myddelton's, and of others like him, in 1600.

Many voyages had been made to India, both by independent adventurers and by the agents of the Turkey and Guinea Companies, before that date. In 1589 several merchants had sought permission of Queen Elizabeth to send some ships to the islands and coast towns of the Indian seas, there to establish markets for the sale of English cloths and other articles, and for the taking in exchange of such native produce as had hitherto only been procurable through Russian or Portuguese traders; and in 1591 three vessels were despatched with that intent, two being lost in a storm, and the third, commanded by Master James Lancaster, only returning 'after many grievous misfortunes.' The promoters of the expedition, however, were not disheartened. In 1599, after long consultation, an association of more than a hundred merchants was formed, Thomas and Robert Myddelton being of the number, and an aggregate capital of 30,133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* being subscribed; and on the last day of 1600, a whole year being spent in arguments with the queen as to the fitness of the enterprise, a charter of privileges was obtained. Preparations were straightway made for enforcing these privileges, and by the 2nd of April five ships were ready to embark under the command of Captain Lancaster, Henry Middleton, 'of Cheeshire,' having charge of one of the vessels.

Of this Henry Middleton's antecedents we are sadly ignorant. It is pretty certain that he accompanied Lancaster on his earlier voyage; but the first we actually know of him is that he was an energetic adviser of the Company's on all matters appertaining to the new expedition. One day we

find a Committee appointed to discuss with him the general arrangements for the voyage; on another he is asked, and gladly consents, to be the Company's principal factor in the possessions it hopes to acquire; and on the third, he is commissioned, with some others, to buy the requisite provisions 'as good and cheap as they can.' At one time, again, a commission is sent to ask what entertainment he desires for himself on the voyage; at another, his advice is taken as to the princes and potentates in India to whom the queen shall write letters of introduction, and as to the terms in which those letters shall be expressed. At length, all preliminaries being completed, he set out as vice-admiral of the 'Hector,' with payment of 100*l.* down and the promise of 200*l.* more if the affair succeeded, and with authority to assume command of the whole expedition in case of Lancaster's death. The little fleet proceeded at once to Acheen, the principal port of Sumatra, and there formed an alliance with the king of the island, who wrote to Queen Elizabeth, telling her how the coming of the English had filled the horizon with joy. Pepper and spice, and all things nice that were procurable in Sumatra, were brought by the natives, and, as good fortune would have it, a large Portuguese vessel, laden with calicoes and other valuable goods, fell into the hands of the English, so that they had more treasure than their ships could hold. Some of these goods they exchanged at a profit for the produce of Bantam in Java, where they established commercial relations; and, in September, 1603, they returned to England with a rich store of wealth for their employers.

The next expedition of the East India Company was undertaken in 1604, and then Middleton succeeded Lancaster in the command of the fleet. Four ships set out in March of that year, and three returned in May, 1606, with some loss of men and property, and with a report of growing jealousy on the part of the Portuguese traders, who found that their monopoly was being seriously infringed, but with net profits amounting to ninety-five per cent. on the capital subscribed. A third voyage was made in 1607, under the command of a Captain Keeling and Henry Middleton's younger brother David, with so much success that the profits to be divided among the shareholders were no less than two hundred and thirty-four per cent.

On this occasion Henry Middleton

stayed at home; but he was not idle. On the 25th of May, 1606, he was knighted at Greenwich on account of his zeal on the East India Company's behalf, and he and his friend Captain Lancaster were in constant communication with its directors (among whom we frequently find mention of his namesakes, Thomas and Robert Myddelton), giving advice on all matters connected with the new expedition, receiving their shares of profits on the amounts ventured by themselves, and the like. In January, 1607, we read this order: 'The Japan boy brought home last voyage by Sir Henry Middleton to be taken by David Middleton as his boy this voyage, and decently apparelled at the Company's charge before his departure;' and in November a committee is appointed 'to agree with Sir Henry Middleton, who seems inclined to go the fourth voyage.' Unfortunately the agreement was not made, as in that case the disastrous issue of the voyage might have been averted. Two vessels were despatched in January, 1608, one to be lost in the Indian seas; and the other, with 70,000*l.* worth of goods on board, to be pulled to pieces on the coast of France, by 'the wicked Bretons, who went aboard to make spoil of the rich merchandize they found therein.' Better success attended the next expedition, conducted by Captain David Middleton, who, having returned from his former voyage, set out again in April, 1609, having only a single ship, the 'Expedition,' to manage, and a good part of that belonging to himself and his elder brother. After an absence of two years, he brought back a cargo of nutmegs and mace, which produced a profit of two hundred and eleven per cent.

Thus far the operations of the East India Company had been only, as it were, experimental, and on the whole the experiment was mightily successful. Hardly a company at all, according to the modern acceptation of the word, it had been, and for some years longer continued to be, little more than a gathering of independent traders who speculated as much or as little as they chose on each separate voyage, and only clubbed together under the direction of managers chosen from themselves, in order that the expeditions might be large enough and sufficiently protected to be conducted securely and with profit. A step in advance, however, was made in May, 1609, when, in lieu of the privileges conferred by Queen Elizabeth, a new Charter was obtained from James I. granting to the Com-

pany 'the whole, entire, and only trade and traffic to the East Indies,' for ever and a day, no one being allowed to have any share in that branch of commerce without licence from the Company, and all the members being bound by oath to be good and true to the king and faithful and assistant to the Company, 'having no singular regard to themselves in hurt or prejudice of the said fellowship.' Encouraged by this, the Company resolved on a larger enterprise than had yet been undertaken. At its first public dinner, suggested by a present of a brace of bucks from the Earl of Southampton, 'to make merry withal in regard of their kindness in accepting him of their company,' it was resolved that two new ships should be built of a sort specially adapted for the business, and they were ready in less than a year. The larger of the two was the largest merchant ship yet built; its burthen being, according to different accounts, either ten, eleven, or twelve hundred tons. A silk ensign, 'with the Company's arms in silk or metal, as shall be thought fit,' was provided by Master Robert Myddelton, the skinner; and on the occasion of its being launched, on the 30th of December, preparations were made for a sumptuous banquet served on china dishes, at which King James, the queen, and the young prince were present. His Majesty christened the ship by the name of 'The Trade's Increase,' and while the salutes were being fired put a medal with a great gold chain about the neck of Sir Thomas Smythe, the first governor of the Company. That done, and 82,000*l.* having been expended in cargoes and shipping expenses, the big ship, attended by two smaller ones, set out in March, 1610, under the command of Sir Henry Middleton, who was instructed to find his chief business in trading with the people on the coasts of the Red Sea. A prosperous voyage was made round the Cape and up the eastern coast of Africa, as far as Mocha, where great show of friendship was made by the governor of the place, and the only difficulty the English felt was for want of a table on which to expose the cloths and other commodities that they brought for sale. Costly presents and very loving and courteous speeches were exchanged, until Middleton had been enticed to take up his residence in the town, and bring with him a quantity of his most valuable goods. No sooner was he on shore, however, than his deputies on shipboard began to misconduct them-

selves, and give some excuse for the rough conduct that the natives had been treacherously contriving. 'One grief on the neck of another,' wrote Middleton, 'makes a burden of my life, and therefore makes me write I scarce know what.' He and the fifty-one companions who were with him, however, had plenty of time for writing, during the six months, from November 1610 to May 1611, of their captivity among the Turks. One of the number, William Pemberton, managed to run away, 'having taken a conceit of captivity under these heathen tyrants.' Wandering about the shore, he found a canoe, tied his shirt to a pole by help of his garters, and so, between paddling and sailing, made his way to the ship, half dead with labour and want of food. Several times he wrote to his master urging him to procure some native clothing, cut off his hair, besmear his face, and sneak out of the town with a burden on his back: if he would do that they would get him safely into a boat. But Middleton did not approve of the expedient. He would neither listen to Pemberton's assurance that 'in this heathenish and barbarous place they were void of all gentle kind of humanity,' and therefore must be met by subterfuge; nor would he consent to the proposal of his chief deputy, Captain Downton, that the English should make a forcible entry into Mocha and so liberate him. At last, however, he made his escape, and only procured the release of his comrades by promising that neither he nor any other English should in future make trading expeditions to those parts. The whole affair caused a loss of eleven months and of more than 6000*l*. It was followed by a tide of good fortune. Quitting the Red Sea, Middleton made for Surat, and, reaching it in October, found a Portuguese squadron of twenty armed vessels stationed at the mouth of the river on purpose to prevent the landing of any rival traders. The Portuguese admiral sent to say that, if the English had authority from his sovereign, they might enter; otherwise the sooner they went away the better. Sir Henry answered that he bore credentials from the King of England to the Great Mogul, whose territory was free to all nations, and who owed no vassalage to the Portuguese; that he wished no harm to the merchants of other nations, but that he certainly intended to enforce the rights of his own. For a time he did his best to carry on peaceful traffic with the natives, but finding himself thwarted

therein, he boldly set his three vessels to attack the enemy's twenty; with such success, that one of the Portuguese frigates was sunk and the others were put to flight, save one, which fell into his hands with a rich store of Indian goods. The coast being thus clear, Sir Henry proceeded to make a treaty with the natives, and to buy from them all the useful commodities that he could find in the place. But good fortune was not to attend the ill-named 'Trade's Increase,' or her commander. Meeting some other ships sent out from England, Middleton returned to Mocha, and, in excusable violation of his agreement with its people, set himself to punish them for the cruelties to which he and his men had been subjected a year before. Then he recrossed the Indian ocean with a view of making a profit at Bantam, but the 'Trade's Increase' struck on a rock during the voyage and was hardly able to reach its destination, and the other two vessels were considerably the worse for two years' knocking about. One of them was sent to England under Captain Downton in the spring of 1613, while Middleton and the rest took up their residence in what is called 'his little new-built village of Pulloopenjaum,' not far from Bantam. 'He that escapes without disease,' Downton had written, 'from that stinking stew of the Chinese part of Bantam must be of a strong constitution of body.' Middleton's men died one by one, and he himself sunk under a sickness that had been oppressing him for months, somewhere near the end of 1613, not, however, before the 'Trade's Increase,' which he had been waiting to repair with material from England, had been beaten to pieces by the waves, 'which is a great pity,' writes Chamberlain in one of his gossiping letters to Sir Dudley Carleton, 'being the goodliest ship of England, and never made voyage before.' Far better would it have been, however, for a score of such ships to have been wasted than that England and the East India Company should lose, in the prime of life, 'the thrice worthy general,' as Sir Dudley Digges termed him, 'who laid the true foundation of our long-desired Company's trade.'

But Sir Henry Middleton had done his work. While he was slowly dying in Java, the East India Company was being remodelled at home, and established on a more permanent footing as a regular joint stock society; and within a year of his death, Sir Thomas Roe was sent as an English ambassador

to the East, there to confirm the commercial relations which Sir Henry had already roughly formed, and to build up proper machinery for maintaining that English credit which the same forerunner had already spent his best energies in slowly defending. Captain David Middleton, moreover, tried to do somewhat in carrying on his brother's work. In April, 1614, he was appointed to the command of a new expedition, and, starting soon after that date, he reached Bantam in the following February, there to rectify the confusion that had ensued upon Sir Henry's death more than a year before. And in many other ways he did solid service to the Company before his death a few years later.

In the meanwhile, however, the Myddeltons who stayed at home were winning for themselves greater fame than came to the Middletons who devoted their talents to the promotion of East Indian commerce. Thomas and Robert Myddelton, as we have seen, were shareholders in the East India Company from the first, and Robert, at any rate, continued all through his life one of its most zealous supporters. But about their doings we have but scanty information, and Hugh, the more famous brother, appears to have attended chiefly to commerce nearer home, and to the development of England's internal prosperity. The management of his goldsmith's shop in Basinghall Street,—we find, among similar entries, that in February, 1604, he received 250*l.* for 'a pendant of one diamond bestowed upon the Queen by His Majesty,'—the oversight of his woollen manufactures in the country, and the fulfilling of his duties as Member of Parliament, where we see him repeatedly employed on committees of inquiry touching trade and finance, afforded him quite as much occupation as could be expected of any one. But there was a business more memorable than any of these which he found time and energy to bring to a successful issue. In January, 1605, he and his brother Robert were on a committee of the House of Commons respecting the possibility of bringing a stream of running water from the river Lea to the northern parts of London, a subject that the increasing need of water-supply for the City had long forced upon the people's attention. 'The matter had been well mentioned though little minded; long debated, but never concluded,' says Stowe, 'till courage and resolution lovingly shook hands together, as it appears, in the soul of this

no way to be daunted, well-minded gentleman.' Master Myddelton had already shown himself 'no way to be daunted.' 'It may please you to understand,' he wrote to Sir John Wynne in 1625, 'that my first undertaking of public works was amongst my own people, within less than a mile of the place where I had my first being, twenty-four or twenty-five years since, in seeking of coals for the town of Denbigh.' No coals were to be found, and Myddelton lost much money through his persevering search for them; but he straightway set himself to the prosecution of public works of another sort, and public works whose value cannot be over-estimated. 'If those,' exclaims quaint Fuller, 'be recounted amongst David's worthies, who, breaking through the army of the Philistines, fetched water from the well of Bethlehem to satisfy the longing of David, founded more in fancy than necessity, how meritorious a work did this worthy man perform, who, to quench the thirst of thousands in the populous city of London, fetched water on his own cost more than four-and-twenty miles, encountering all the way an army of opposition, grappling with hills, struggling with rocks, fighting with forests, till, in defiance of difficulties, he had brought his project to perfection!' The story of Myddelton's work in constructing the New River has been so excellently given in Mr. Smiles's '*Lives of the Engineers*,' that here we shall tell only its more important incidents, owing much of what we do say to the diligent research with which that volume has been prepared.*

The business was fairly entered upon on the 28th of March, 1609, when the corporation of London formally accepted Myddelton's proposal to bring a supply of water from Chadwell and Amwell, in Hertfordshire, to Islington, as 'a thing of great consequence, worthy of acceptance for the good of the City,' stipulating only that the work should be begun in two months and finished, if possible, within four years. The first sod was turned early in May; and straightway began a hail-storm of angry abuse and idle complaint. The owners of lands through which the New River was to pass petitioned Parliament for their protection,

* For help in the writing of other parts of this chapter we owe much to Mr. Smiles's private courtesy, as well as to his published work; and, for assistance in the preparation of chapters hereafter to be published, our readers will have to share with us in obligations for a greater debt than is here incurred.

representing that their meadows would be turned into 'bogs and quagmires,' their ploughed fields into 'squalid ground;' that their farms would be 'mangled,' and that the canal would be worse than an open ditch into which men and beasts would tumble by the score in fine weather, and which every heavy rainfall would cause to overflow, to the certain ruin of all the poor on its banks. 'Much ado there is in the House,' wrote one member in May, 1610, when the thing had been a year in construction, and upwards of 3000*l.* had been spent upon it out of Myddelton's own purse, 'about the work undertaken and far advanced already by Myddelton, of the cutting of a river through the grounds of many men, who, for their particular interests, so strongly oppose themselves to it, and are like, as it is said, to overthrow it all.' Luckily they did not succeed. A bill was brought into Parliament and referred to a committee, but as the House was soon after adjourned, and did not meet again for four years, the work had been completed before their report could be made. Myddelton steadily pursued his work, without regard to the 'accursed and malevolent interposition,' as Stowe calls it, 'of those enemies of all good endeavours, danger, difficulty, impossibility, detraction, contempt, scorn, derision, yea, and desperate despite.' Stowe tells us how he himself went often to watch the progress of the river, and 'diligently observed that admirable art, pains, and industry were bestowed for the passage of it, by reason that all grounds are not of a like nature, some being oozy and very muddy, others again as stiff, craggy, and stony. The depth of the trench in some places descended full thirty feet, if not more, whereas in other places it required a sprightly art again to mount it over a valley in a trough, between a couple of hills, the trough all the while borne up by wooden arches, some of them fixed in the ground very deep, and rising in height above twenty-three feet.' Honest Stowe would have marvelled a little at modern developments of engineering art: but so, too, would Myddelton; and if we would measure the greatness of the man's achievement we must compare it with previous and contemporary works, not with those produced by workmen who have been stimulated by examples such as his.

Myddelton worked with desperate energy, but the opposition he had to encounter, and the great expenses to which he was put, might have ruined,

or at any rate delayed, the scheme, had not help come from an unexpected quarter. 'King James,' writes one king-worshipping historian of Hertfordshire, 'residing at Theobalds, through whose park the New River runs, was heartily concerned for the success of the endeavour, and promoted it with so great zeal, as perhaps he may be reckoned chief in the work.' Hardly that, indeed; but let King James have his meed of praise. Politically blind, he had a good eye to business, and, where selfishness and vanity were not in the way, a fair amount of wisdom. He saw that the complaints of his subjects were without reason, and that Myddelton was engaged on a work that would bring wealth to its promoters as well as health to the people on whose behalf it was undertaken. So in November, 1611, his Majesty made an agreement with the goldsmith to the effect that he would pay half the expenses of the undertaking and afford special facilities for carrying on the work as far as it had to pass through the royal grounds, on condition that he should receive a moiety of all interest and profits to be derived from it when complete. In accordance with this contract, Myddelton received from the king, in several instalments, the sum of 8609*l.* 1*4s.* 6*d.*; whence it appears that the whole cost of the work was 17,219*l.* 9*s.*; a large sum to be spent on a single undertaking in the seventeenth century, but small enough when we consider the amount of good that was done thereby. The distance between London and Chadwell is hardly twenty miles, but the length of the New River was made nearly 'double as many,' to lessen the number of cuttings and embankments. All was done by the autumn of 1613, and then Myddelton was rewarded for the contempt and abuse that had attended his persevering efforts through four years and a half.

On Michaelmas-day the New River was formally opened, when a procession started from the Guildhall, with Sir John Swinnerton, the Lord Mayor, at its head, and made its way to the reservoir at Islington, there to witness a characteristic pageant, composed for the occasion by Thomas Middleton, the dramatist, a namesake, but apparently no kinsman of Sir Hugh's. After a performance of music, there appeared 'a troop of labourers, to the number of threescore or upwards, all in green caps alike, bearing in their hands the symbols of their several employments,' and by one of their number, or by Thomas

Middleton on their behalf, this speech was delivered :—

'Long have we laboured, long desired and prayed,
For this great work's perfection: and by th' aid
Of Heaven and good men's wishes, 'tis at length
Happily conquered by cost, wit, and strength
After five years of dear expense in days,
Travail and pains, besides the infinite ways
Of malice, envy, false suggestions,
Able to daunt the spirit of mighty ones
In wealth and courage, this, a work so rare,
Only by one man's industry, cost, and care,
Is brought to blest effect, so much withstood;
His only aim the city's general good.

'Then worthy magistrates, to whose content,
Next to the State, all this great care was bent,
And for the public good, which grace requires,
Your loves and furtherance chiefly he desires
'To cherish these proceedings, which may give
Courage to some that may hereafter live
To practise deeds of goodness and of fame,
And gladly light their actions by his name.'

Then followed a description of the labourers employed upon the work :—

'First here's the overseer, this tried man,
An ancient soldier and an artisan;
The clerk; next him the mathematician;
The master of the timber-work takes place
Next after these; the measurer in like case;
Bricklayer; and engineer; and after those,
The borer; and the pavier; then it shows
The labourers next; keeper of Amwell head;
The walkers last; so all their names are read.
Yet these but parcels of six hundred more,
That at one time have been employed before;
Yet these in sight, and all the rest will say,
That every week they had their royal pay!
—Now for the fruits then. Flow forth, precious spring,
So long and dearly sought for, and now bring
Comfort to all that love thee; loudly sing,
And, with thy crystal murmur struck together,
Bid all thy true well-wishers welcome hither'

'At which words,' the narrative concludes, 'the flood-gates opened, the stream let into the cistern, drums and trumpets giving it triumphant welcomes, and, for the close of this their honourable entertainment, a peal of chambers.'

But there was yet greater show of honour to the Myddeltons on the Lord Mayors' Day following this 29th of September. Sir Thomas Myddelton, the grocer, was Mayor Elect for the ensuing year, and the festival prepared for the occasion, notable among Lord Mayors' Shows of all times, is well worth comparing with such degenerate celebrations as the one that, the other day, amused the children of London. In this instance was performed a sort of masque, written by the same Thomas

Middleton who penned the speech in honour of Sir Hugh, and entitled, 'The Triumph of Truth.' The procession started from Bow Lane, where the citizens assembled to hear some music, and, when that was over, to see the emblematical appearance of London, 'attired like a reverend mother, a long white hair naturally flowing on either side of her; on her head a model of steeples and turrets, her habit crimson silk, her left hand holding a key of gold.' In a long speech this lady addressed the new Lord Mayor to the effect that, through all the former years, she had trained and watched over him like a mother, and

'Now to thy charge, thy government, thy cares,
Thy mother in her age submits her years;
And though (to my abundant grief I speak it,
Which now o'erflows my joy) some sons I have,
Thankless, unkind, and disobedient,
Rewarding all my homilies with neglect,
The thankfulness in which thy life doth move,
Did ever promise fairer fruits of love.
So go thou forward, my thrice-honoured son,
In ways of goodness; glory is best won
When merit brings it home; disdain all titles
Purchased with coin; of honours take thou hold
By thy desert—let others buy 't with gold.
Fix thy most precious thoughts upon the weight
Thou goest to undergo, 'tis the just government
Of this famed city, we, whom nations call
Their brightest eye: then with what care and fear
Ought I to be o'erseen to be kept clear?
Spots in deformed faces are scarce noted,
Fair cheeks are stained if ne'er so little blotted.
See'st thou this key of gold? it shows thy charge;
This place is the king's chamber; all pollution,
Sin, and uncleanness must be locked out here,
And be kept sweet with sanctity, faith, and fear.'

That discourse ended, Sir Thomas Myddelton proceeded to the river side on his way to St. Paul's. At Baynard's Castle he was greeted by Truth's Angel on horseback, 'his raiment of white silk powdered with stars of gold,' on whom attended Zeal, 'in a garment of flame-coloured silk, with bright hair on his head, from which shot fire-beams, his right hand holding a flaming scourge, intimating thereby that, as he is the manifestor of Truth, he is likewise the chastiser of Indolence and Error.' They made suitable speeches, and then appeared Error, 'his garment of ash-coloured silk, his head rolled in a cloud over which stood an owl, a mole on one shoulder, a bat on the other, all symbols of blind ignorance and darkness'; and

accompanying him was Envy, 'eating a human heart, mounted on a rhinoceros, her left breast bare where a snake fastened, holding in her right hand a dart tinged with blood.' Both of these also addressed the new Lord Mayor, seeking to win him for themselves:—

'This twelvemonth, if thou lov'st revenge or gain,

I'll teach thee to cast mists to blind the plain
And simple eye of man; he shall not know 't,
Nor see thy wrath when 'tis upon his throat;
All shall be carried with such art and wit,
That what thy lust acts, shall be counted fit.
Then for attendants that may best observe thee
I'll pick out sergeants of my band to serve thee:
Here's Gluttony and Sloth, two precious slaves,
Will tell thee more than a whole herd of
knaves

The worth of every office to a hair,
And who bids most, and how the markets are.
Let them alone to smell, and for a need,
They'll bring thee in bribes for measures and
light bread.

Keep thy eye winking, and thy hand wide open,
• Then shalt thou know what wealth is, and the
scope

Of rich authority. Oh, 'tis sweet and dear!
Make use of time then, thou hast but one poor
year.

There is a poor, thin, threadbare thing called
Truth:

I give thee warning of her; if she speak,
Stop both thine ears close; most professions
break

That ever dealt with her; unlucky thing.
She's almost sworn to nothing; I can bring
A thousand of our parish, besides queans,
That ne'er knew what Truth meant, nor ever
means;

Some I could cull and lure, e'en in this throng.
If I would show my children, and how strong
I were in fiction. 'Las! poor simple stray,
She's all her lifetime finding out one way,
She's but one foolish way, straight on, right
forward,

And yet she makes a toll on 't, and goes on,
With care and fear forsooth, when I can run
Over a hundred with delight and pleasure,
Backways and byways, and fetch in by measure.
After the wishes of my heart, by shifts,
Deceit, and slight. And I'll give thee gifts;
I'll show thee all my corners, yet untold,
The very nooks where beldames hide their
gold,

In hollow walls and chimneys, where the sun
Never yet shone, nor Truth came ever near:
'Tis of thy life I'll make the golden year.'

Much more to the same effect Error might have said, had not Zeal, 'stirred up with divine indignation at the impudence of these hell-hounds,' pushed them away, and made room for Truth herself, who came 'in a close garment of white satin, which made her appear thin and naked, figuring thereby her simplicity and nearness of heart to those that embrace her; a robe of white silk

cast over it, filled with eyes of eagles, showing her deep insight and height of wisdom; over her thrice-sanctified head a milk-white dove, and on each shoulder one, the sacred emblems of purity, meekness, and innocence; under her feet serpents, in that she treads down all subtlety and fraud; her forehead empaled with a diadem of stars, the witness of her eternal descent; on her breast a pure round crystal, showing the brightness of her thoughts and actions; a sun in her right hand, than which nothing is truer; a fan, filled all with stars, in her left, with which she parts darkness and strikes away the vapours of ignorance.' She in her turn addressed the Mayor, showing him that her counsels alone had brought him to the dignity he that day received, and that he could only continue in the paths of honour by continuing her servant. Then she conducted him on his way, Error following as closely as she could, past five islands, whereon sat five 'dumb glories,' representing the five senses. Soon the procession was met by a strange ship, with the King of the Moors, his Queen, and two attendants, on board, and of course it stopped to listen to a long speech from his able Majesty, relating how he had come from his distant home to do honour to one of the foremost of the merchants who had done so much for him and his by bringing them within the circle of civilization and commerce:—

'My queen and people at one time won
By the religious conversation
Of English merchants, factors, travellers,
Whose truth did with our spirits hold com-
merce

As their affairs with us; following their path.
We all were brought to the true Christian faith.
Such benefit in good example dwells;
It oft hath power to convert Infidels.'

We need not follow the procession in detail through all its stages. But we must look for a moment at the Mount Triumphant, 'the chief grace and lustre of the whole Triumph,' which met the eyes of the company as they turned the corner of Conduit Street. At first the Mount was covered with 'a thick sulphurous darkness,' placed there by Error and guarded by four monsters, Barbarism, Ignorance, Impudence, and Falsehood. But as soon as Truth's chariot approached, the monsters trembled, fell down, and at her command the darkness was dispersed. Then was seen 'a bright spreading canopy, stuck thick with stars and beams of gold, shooting forth round about it.' The whole Mount appeared

as a mass of radiant glory, with the reverend figure of London, seated in great honour at its base, and Religion enthroned upon its summit, Liberality being on her right hand, and Perfect Love on her left. On either side were displayed the charitable and religious works of London, especially of the Grocers' Company, and on two lesser heights were seated Knowledge and Modesty, with Chastity, Fame, Simplicity, and Meekness in the rear. Much wholesome counsel was uttered by these honourable personages, and there was further talking on the part of Truth and others, after the Lord Mayor had been installed, had dined at Guildhall, and had attended service at St. Paul's Cathedral.

On the occasion of that festival, or very soon after it, Hugh Myddelton was knighted by James I. The expenses which he had incurred in the construction of the New River had so impoverished him, that he found it necessary to borrow from the Corporation of London a sum of 3000*l.*, at six per cent.; and the need of money for carrying on his other projects induced him soon after to sell the greater part of his interest in the concern. The whole was divided into seventy-two shares, of which the king held thirty-six. Of Myddelton's thirty-six, all but two were disposed of before June, 1619, when he and those to whom he had sold them obtained letters patent for a joint stock society to be called 'The Company of the New River from Chadwell and Amwell to London,' with Sir Hugh for its first governor. To protect the Company from any overpowering influence of royalty, the king might only send an agent with one vote; the other shares carried a vote apiece. Until 1640 there was such constant need of money in constructing new works and repairing old ones, that there was hardly any dividend, and consequently Charles I., having pressing want of money to meet the growing opposition of his subjects, sold his shares to the Company for a fee farm rent of 500*l.* a year. Before the end of the century, however, the shares were worth about 200*l.* a year, and now they yield more than 850*l.*

Sir Hugh Myddelton's sale of his four-and-thirty shares brought him in something like 10,000*l.* This money, or most of it, he at once proceeded to spend in the embankment of Brading Harbour, a noble work, but one so little connected with commerce that we may leave its history to be learnt from Mr. Smiles's volume. Then he returned to

his old, and formerly unsuccessful project of mining in Wales. A Company of Miners Royal in Cardiganshire had been established in 1604; but its operations had not been profitable. In 1617, however, Sir Hugh had farmed its mines for 400*l.* a year, and after some costly engineering, he succeeded in working them to great advantage, sending so much gold to the Royal Mint that, for this and other services, he was made a baronet on the 19th of October, 1622, King James, by a rare freak of generosity, acquitting him of the customary fee of 1095*l.* due to the Crown. Nor was that all. His grateful sovereign confirmed to him the lease of the Mines Royal 'as a recompense for his industry in bringing a new river into London,' and exempted him from the payment of royalty for whatever gold and silver he might discover. In these ways Sir Hugh Myddelton, though never a rich man, and much impoverished by his work on the New River, was enabled to end his days in comfort, and leave a respectable patrimony to his children. Sometimes he lived at Lodge, near to the Cardiganshire mines; sometimes at Bush Hill, his country-house near Edmonton, convenient for superintending the New River works; at other times he was to be seen at his house in Basinghall Street, where his goldsmith's business was carried on by his eldest son William. He worked hard to the last. Just as in earlier years he and his brothers, Thomas and Robert, had interested themselves in European and Asiatic trade, we find that in his old age he was a sharer in the Virginian commerce that had lately sprung up through the energy of Raleigh and other enterprising voyagers. But his chief interest was, as always before, in home concerns. In 1625 his friend and kinsman, Sir John Wynne, wrote to urge the undertaking of some new engineering work near Denbigh. 'I may say to you,' he added, 'what the Jews said to Christ, "We have heard of thy great works done abroad, do now somewhat in thine own country."' Sir Hugh Myddelton had been a zealous friend to his native town and neighbourhood all through his life, by word and deed, as its civic officer and as its representative in Parliament. 'No burgesses of Denbigh,' he had written to the town council in 1613, 'shall be more forward and willing than myself to further any good for the town, and I take it very friendly that you will employ me in any business that may tend to the public or private good of

that town, and I sorrow to think that I can do no more for you.' But his working time was nearly over now. 'I am grown into years,' he said in answer to Sir John Wynne, 'and full of business here at the mines, the river at London, and other places, my weekly charge being above 200*l.*, which maketh me very unwilling to undertake any other work, and the least of these requireth a whole man with a large purse.' Therefore he abstained from the enterprise, and spent his closing years in

managing the works he had already taken in hand. He died on the 10th of December, 1631, at the ripe age of six and seventy, leaving, among many other charitable bequests, a share in the New River Company, to be applied by the Guild of Goldsmiths in assisting its more necessitous brethren, 'especially such as shall be of his name, kindred, and country,' a fund that contributed to the support of more than one of his own degenerate and spendthrift offspring.



CHAPTER IX.

HUMPHREY CHETHAM OF MANCHESTER.

History tells us little enough about Sir Hugh Myddelton; but it gives yet scantier information about his foremost rival in good works among the worthies of the mercantile world during the earlier half of the seventeenth century. In a very few paragraphs may be summed up all that is known of the most illustrious man in the early annals of Manchester, the man who did more, perhaps, than any other, to make of it an influential town and the centre of a new world of commercial energy.

Humphrey Chetham, either the fourth or the fifth son of Henry Chetham of Crumpsall, a suburb of Manchester, was born in July, 1580. In the reign of Henry III. a Sir Geoffrey de Chetham, so called from a village at that time two miles distant from Manchester,

though now absorbed into the township, was sheriff of Lancashire. He held the office between the years 1259 and 1262, and from him were descended the Chethams of Nuthurst, of Turton, and of Chetham. In what way the Chethams of Crumpsall were related to these three branches is not clear; but in 1635 we find that Thomas Chetham, of Nuthurst, granted a certificate to Humphrey, the merchant, to the effect that his family was descended from 'a younger brother of the blood and lineage' of his ancestors. Master Humphrey Chetham, however, cared little for ancestral dignities, and was content to win credit for himself as an honest tradesman. It is likely that he was educated at the Grammar School, founded in 1524 by the Oldhams and Berwicks, whose grandchildren were his kinsmen, and that, after that, he was apprenticed to the business for which

even then Manchester was beginning to be famous.

Woollen manufacture had been carried on near the old Roman and Saxon town as early as 1322, and a few years later some Flemings settling in the neighbourhood, did much to improve the trade. In 1520, according to one old writer, 'there were three famous clothiers living in the north country; Cuthbert of Kendall, Hodgkins of Halifax, and Martin Brian (more probably Byron) of Manchester. Every one of these kept a great number of servants at work, carders, spinners, weavers, fullers, dyers, shearmen, &c.' Martin Brian or Byron set an example that found many followers. In Henry VIII.'s reign Manchester and Bolton became the chief places of resort for both woollen and linen manufactures. 'Manchester is the fairest, best builded, quickest, and most populous town of all Lancashire,' writes Leland in 1538; and he adds, 'Bolton-upon-Moore market standeth most by cottons; divers villages in the moors about Bolton do make cottons.' Manchester cottons or coatings, be it noted, were then, and for a hundred years to come, a rough kind of woollen cloth, much esteemed for their warmth and durability. Not till the seventeenth century were what we call cotton goods much made in England, and then the word was used indiscriminately for both kinds of stuff. 'The town of Manchester,' wrote the author of 'The Treasure of Traffic,' in 1641, 'must be worthily for their encouragement commended, who buy the yarn of the Irish in great quantity, and weaving it, return the same again into Ireland to sell. Neither doth their industry rest here; for they buy cotton-wool in London that comes first from Cyprus and Smyrna, and at home work the same, and perfect it into fustians, vermilions, dimities, and other such stuffs, and then return it to London, where the same is vended and sold, and not seldom sent into foreign parts.' 'As for Manchester,' said Fuller in 1662, 'the cottons thereof carry away the credit in our own nation, and so they did a hundred and fifty years ago;' and alluding to Leland's praise above quoted, he adds, 'and sure I am it hath lost neither spruceness nor spirits since that time.'

So much of Manchester trade during and near the lifetime of Humphrey Chetham, its foremost promoter. 'The Manchester traders,' says the old historian of the town, 'went regularly on market days to Bolton to buy pieces of fustian of the weaver. Mr. Chetham

was the principal buyer. When he had made his markets, the remainder was purchased by Mr. Cooke, a much less honourable dealer, who took the advantage of calling the pieces what length he pleased and giving his own price.' Worthy Humphrey found that honesty was the best policy. For some thirty years he paid his visits to Bolton, occasionally going on longer errands to London and elsewhere, making it his chief business to buy the Lancashire cottons in the grey and take them home to finish off for sale to the retail drapers, but also keeping a sort of shop for warps and woofs and the other implements of the weavers' calling, and making profit out of the thousand and one minor articles from pins to millers' sacks which Manchester workmen needed for their own use, or made for sale in other parts of England. In these ways he grew rich. In 1620 we find that Sir John Byron of Newstead Abbey, apparently a descendant of the old clothier, and ancestor of the poet, sold Clayton Hall to the two brothers, 'George Chetham of London, grocer, and Humphrey Chetham of Manchester, chapman,' for the sum of 4700*l*.; and a few years later, in 1629, Humphrey was rich enough to pay 4000*l*. out of his own purse for Turton Tower, near Bolton. Henceforth he seems to have lived much at one or other of these mansions, paying less attention to the business that had doubtless already procured him as much wealth as he cared for.

We have one curious proof of his fame as a rich man. James I. had set the fashion of making money by the sale of knighthoods, and Charles, finding that Stuart knighthoods were not reckoned worth the buying, went a step further and exacted fines from many of the wealthier commoners who rejected the honour proffered them. In August, 1631, 'Mr. Humphrey Chetham of Turton,' was summoned to Whitehall, there 'to compound for not appearing at his Majesty's coronation to take upon him the order of knighthood.' We hear nothing more of the business, but may be sure that Charles was too poor at that time to be baulked of his money.

The worthy merchant could buy the privilege of continuing to be called plain Mister; but he could not save himself from a closer connection with the government than he cared to have. 'Noble sir,' he said in a letter to one Mr. Bannister, an influential man in country affairs, written in the summer of 1634, 'so it is that a report sud-

denly bruited abroad which comes to me by the relation of your brother, puts me in some jealousy that I am in the way to be sheriff, which, although the consideration of my own unworthiness, methinks, might correct the conceit, yet out of the observation of former times, wherein this eminent office hath fallen very low, I cannot presume of freedom, but am confident out of your ancient professed friendship, you will not be the instrument to bring me upon the stage. But that's not all; for my earnest desire is, seeing that power is in your hands, that you would stand betwixt me and danger, that, if any put me forwards, you will stand in the way and suffer me not to come in the rank of those that shall be presented to the king's view, whereby I shall be made more popular and subject to the peril of the times. I am ashamed to express what a burthen this honour would be to me; therefore, good air, let it light where it may be more welcome, and so I shall rest in peace.' That, however, was not to be. In November, 1634, Chetham was appointed sheriff for the county of Lancaster, and he continued in office until March, 1640. 'He discharged the place with great honour,' says Fuller, 'inasmuch that very good gentlemen, of birth and estate, did wear his cloth at the Assize, to testify their unfeigned affection for him.'

Yet his first troubles on entering the office sprang out of the dissatisfaction felt by these same gentlemen at its being given to a tradesman. To propitiate them the self-made man looked up his pedigree, and obtained from the representative of the old house of Chetham the certificate of kinship already mentioned. That done, some friends in London, who affected to be learned in such matters, supplied him with a coat of arms, and in all innocence he adopted it. But the arms belonged to some one else, who resented the appropriation, and out of the blunder sprang a lively little quarrel, which was only settled by the merchant's procuring, through his friends, a new escutcheon. 'They' (the arms), he wrote in satire of the whole affair, 'are not depicted in so good metal as those arms we gave for them; but where the herald meets with a novice he will double his gain.'

Humphrey Chetham, however, was no novice in the doing of any work that lay before him. His first business as sheriff, and the only one about which we have much information, was connected with the never-to-be-forgotten levying of ship-money by Charles I.

Chetham was not a Hampden. Living far away from parliamentary influence, and troubling himself little about politics of any sort, he contented himself with doing, as far as possible, his duty to both king and people. He was ordered to collect ship-money, and he at once set about it, only troubling himself to find the easiest and most equitable way of doing the work. 'The first thing,' we find in a note made by him on the occasion, 'is to consider how much money will purchase a ship of such a burthen; the second is to apportion the same moneys equally. For this, methinks, the mayors of every town should, either by some ancient rule or tradition, give some direction what and how much every of the said towns ought to pay; for if you shall tax and assess men according to their estate, then Liverpool being poor, and now, as it were, a-begging, must pay very little; and if you shall tax men according to their trading and profit by shipping, then Lancaster, as I verily think, hath little to do that way.' Therefore he arranged that uncommercial Lancaster should pay only 8*l.*, and poor Liverpool but 15*l.* out of the 498*l.* collected from the whole country. Nearly as much as both towns contributed was drawn from Chetham's own pocket, his expenses in the collection amounting to 22*l.* 'I moved for allowance,' he says, 'but could get none.'

That was a real grievance to the worthy merchant. He was willing enough to give away money; but he did not like to be robbed, as in this case he thought that he was. So when, in August, 1635, the order for a second levying of ship-money came down, he took the law into his own hands. In this instance, the much larger sum of 3500*l.* was required, and Chetham, in getting it in, added 96*l.* to the amount, by way of making good the expense he was put to on that as well as on the former occasion. But that was a bit of exaction that the tender-hearted and upright members of King Charles's government could on no account tolerate. They refused to repay the money which he had paid to his agents; but they also forbade his levying the amount for himself. He was ordered to refund the 96*l.*; and after an angry correspondence, that lasted some years, he did it with a bad grace.

That was in the spring of 1640, the year in which the Long Parliament assembled and the civil war was virtually begun. Chetham, as we have already said, was not disposed to have

any more connection than he could help with either party in the strife. But his sympathies were with the Parliamentarians, and the Commonwealth leaders found him too influential and trustworthy a man to be left in the background. In June, 1641, he was appointed High Collector of Subsidies within the county of Lancaster; and in October, 1643, that laborious and thankless office gave place to another as troublesome, that of general treasurer for the county. Chetham petitioned to be excused—he was three-and-sixty at the time—‘on account of his many infirmities;’ but the petition was not listened to, and he was kept to the work for at least five years. ‘Whereas,’ ran an order of Sir Thomas Fairfax’s, dated the 19th of January, 1644, ‘the army of the enemy are very potent, cruel, and violent, and ever ready to assault and devour us and our neighbourhood, without making any distinction of persons, unless, by God’s assistance and our timely endeavour, there be some speedy prevention, which cannot be done by any ordinary means, without the raising and maintaining of extraordinary forces, which, in these times of imminent danger, we are enforced to do; therefore for the support and maintenance of the same forces, it is ordered that an assessment of 500*l.* by the week be made and levied in the county of Lancaster; and that the moneys so levied be from time to time collected and paid monthly unto Humphrey Chetham, of Turton, Esquire, appointed treasurer for that purpose, which treasurer is to pay the same over immediately to the treasurer of the army.’

Chetham did not find his task a light one. He had thought 498*l.* a large sum to be levied in his county as half a year’s ship-money; but here he was answerable for the collection of 500*l.* a week. After a while the impost was greatly reduced; but even then he had no little difficulty in getting together the money, and many were the begging letters and scolding letters sent to him from time to time. There was one sum of 200*l.* about which he was specially troubled. On the 16th of November, 1648, Colonel Duckinfield wrote to him from Chester, saying, ‘I am again directed to demand the 200*l.*, and I do assure you I will ere long send a hundred horse to quarter in your county till it be paid to me. Necessity compels me hereto, because the garrisons of Liverpool and Lancaster are in extreme want of moneys, and I will not suffer them to starve whilst I have

charge of them.’ Alarmed at that blunt threat, Chetham at once wrote up to General Asheton and the committee, sending his accounts and showing that all the money he had received had long since been paid to the authorities, ‘and the rest, if it ever come in, will not discharge an order of 750*l.* for the soldiers of our county, whereof I have paid part, and the rest, when I receive it, shall not stay in my hands.’ The Parliamentary Commissioners were satisfied with the explanation; but Duckinfield was not. On the 29th of November he wrote again to ‘his much respected friend, Mr. Humphrey Chetham of Clayton.’ ‘If you please,’ he then said, ‘within eight days to procure me the said 200*l.* I shall account it as a favour from you; otherwise I will send four troops of horse into your county that I can very well spare.’ But the merchant made another appeal to the general committee; and the refractory colonel appears to have been silenced.

But if, on this occasion, he escaped, Chetham suffered heavily enough in other ways through the commotions of the civil war. One of ‘several notes of particulars for the general account of charges laid out for the wars,’ is specially interesting, showing, as it does, that Chetham, though now an old man, living in days too troublous for much attention to commerce, still practised his merchant’s calling. ‘Having lent Mr. Francis Mosely 760*l.*,’ we read, ‘and requiring the same of him again, he directed me to take up half of the said sum of some of my neighbour shopkeepers in Manchester, to give my bill of exchange for the same, to be paid by his partner at London, Mr. Robert Law, upon sight of the said bill; and the other half of my money to be paid likewise in exchange a month after that. In pursuance of which directions, before I could effect it, the said Mr. Mosely was proved a delinquent, and the said money intended for me, with the rest that he had in cash, in cloth, his debts and book-debts and all other his goods, by order of Parliament were sequestered and seized for the public use; so as hereby doth appear there went to the Parliament, of my money, 760*l.* And were an account required of losses sustained by the enemy (my house being three times entered and kept for a certain time, until all my goods, both within my house and without, were either spoilt or quite carried away) I could give an account to a very great value.’

Yet Humphrey Chetham was rich

enough to spare some money to help on the noblest battle for civil liberty that has been fought in modern centuries. During his long and busy life—a bachelor's life throughout—he had amassed considerable wealth; and in his old age he set about disposing of it in a noble way. From the beginning he was an open-handed man, ever ready to give help, both to his kindred and to strangers. But as he advanced in years one princely scheme of charity took shape in his mind. His will tells us that, in his lifetime, he had 'taken up and maintained fourteen poor boys of the town of Manchester, six of the town of Salford, and two of the town of Droylsden; in all twenty-two.' An extant account-book in his handwriting shows that this began about October, 1649, and shows also with what minute care he attended to his charge. Here we see entries without number about blue kersey, yellow baize, and linen cloth; thread, buttons, and beeswax; caps, girdles, and shoes; to say nothing of books, desks, and other implements of schooling. About this time, moreover, we find him in treaty for the purchase of the set of buildings that were afterwards converted into Chetham College, although from the unsettled state of the times, the transaction was not completed till 1665, twelve years after his death. But at first he appears to have put the boys to board with his poorer friends, whom thus he helped as well; and when that arrangement was found inconvenient suitable quarters were procured for them.

Full of this project for a Manchester Blue-coat School, the worthy merchant made his will on the 16th of December, 1651. After making ample bequests to his nephews and other kinsmen, as well as to various friends and charitable institutions, he directed that the number of his poor scholars should be increased to forty, three being taken from Droylsden, ten from Bolton, and five from Turton. A sum of 7500*l.* was to be spent in founding and endowing a

hospital for their maintenance and education, between the ages of six and fourteen, and then for putting them out as apprentices, unless they were otherwise provided for. If there was any surplus, it was to be invested and applied 'for the augmentation of the number of poor boys, or for the better maintenance and binding apprentice of the said forty poor boys.' That was the beginning of the institution that now gives excellent training to a hundred lads at a time. Connected with it is a library containing some twenty-five thousand printed volumes and a respectable number of manuscripts. Towards its construction, Chetham left 1000*l.* with another 1000*l.* to be spent in books, in addition to all the proceeds of his otherwise unassigned property, plate, household stuff, and the like. And besides all this, 200*l.* was 'to be bestowed by his executors in godly English books, such as Calvin's, Preston's, and Perkins's works, comments or annotations upon the Bible, or other books proper to the edification of the common people, to be chained upon desks, or to be fixed to the pillars or in other convenient places, in the parishes of Manchester, Bolton,' and elsewhere.

We know very little of Humphrey Chetham's habits as a merchant, and nothing of his private life, save what may be inferred from the stray bits of information that we have been able to string together, with Fuller's statement, on the authority of one of his executors, that 'he was a diligent reader of the Scriptures, and of the works of sound divines; a respecter of such ministers as he accounted truly godly, upright, sober, discreet, and sincere.' But that is enough. He died on the 12th of October, 1653, two months before the beginning of Cromwell's protectorate, and was buried in the Collegiate Church, now the Cathedral, of Manchester, whither three and seventy years before he had been brought for baptism.

H. R. F. B.



NOVEMBER.

* The human mortals want their winter here.'—*Midsummer Night's Dream*.

WILL the leaves *never* fall?
 These rotting remnants of a long-past spring;
 Adroop along th' unfruited garden-wall,
 Aflaunt gold-gauded on the poplar tall,
 In death-dews glistening:
 Will the leaves *never* fall?

Will the frost *never* come?
 The kindly frost that, with its healthful sting,
 Probes to the quick dull autumn's dross and scum,
 And strikes drear winds and fretting waters dumb,
 With cruel kindly sting:
 Will the frost *never* come?

Will the snow *never* lie,
 The quiet snow—o'er all th' unquiet earth?
 And bury out of sight the festering sty
 Of lothly things that cannot live or die?
 Deep o'er th' unquiet earth,
 Will the snow *never* lie?

Will my heart *never* cease—
 My autumn-heart—to cherish hopes of spring?
 No kindly frosts to bring a late release?
 Nor snows to bury life-in-death at peace?
 From outworn hopes of Spring,
 Will my heart *never* cease?

J. A.



ROSE BLACKETT AND HER LOVERS.

'YES, I suppose it is a good thing,' said Fred Whitfield, yawning, a little indifferently, considering the occasion. 'You see my mother made it up, so that I don't take much credit to myself in the matter. I dare say I might have gone in and won on my own hook if I had liked; but I left it all to the old lady. She likes managing. So she and Mrs. Blackett laid their heads together, and Rose and I said yes.'

'Well, Fred, you certainly are the most extraordinary fellow!' said his friend, laughing; 'I don't think many people would imagine you were speaking of your marriage.'

'Dessay not,' returned Fred. 'People go in for such a jolly lot of bosh on those occasions; they cannot understand that one should have any common sense in the matter. Time's gone by for blisses and kisses, and Cupids and arrows, and all that rubbish; and it's all very well, you know, to like the girl you are going to marry—but hang it all! one needn't make a fool of oneself about it! I like Rose Blackett very well. She's a nice girl enough; no nonsense about her; can ride well, which is something, and plays croquet first-rate; she is good tempered, and, I am thankful to say, without sentimentality; so we hit it off exactly; but as for being over head and ears in love, and all that stuff, I'm far too used up for anything of the kind, and she is too sensible. We marry because our mothers wish it, and because—as they wish it—we might as well marry each other as any one else. I can't say I particularly want to marry any one; but I suppose I must do my duty that way; and so you see I do it.'

'All very well, Master Fred, but I cannot say I think you are in a proper frame of mind,' said Harvey Wynn, 'and I only hope that when I am going to be married I shall be over head and ears in love with my wife. I don't think I would let my mother make up a marriage for me, however sensible in its outlines.'

'Ah! but then you are such a

deuced romantic fellow,' laughed Fred. 'Now you see I have gone through all that, and have come out on the other side; and so I save myself no end of trouble and anxiety; and let me tell you, that is no contemptible thing to do in life, if you can.'

'Just so,' said Harvey; 'and by that reasoning the more nearly we get down to oysterdom the wiser our philosophy.'

'Not a bad idea, Harvey. An oyster must have a jolly time of it till he's caught. And even then—we are all caught some time or other: so what does it matter?'

'Not much, perhaps; but I cannot say I like the oyster theory. I like to live up to the fullest of my powers while I do live, and when I have worn myself out, then it is time to die. But vegetation, social or emotional, does not suit me.'

'All the result of temperament and organization, my dear fellow,' said Fred, languidly; 'you see you have a big heart and big lungs and big muscles and a big brain, and are a son of Anak altogether. I have a weak heart and weak lungs, and more nerves than muscles, and an irritable brain which has to be kept quiet by the never-to-be-sufficiently-praised nicotine; and so emotion and excitement and all that sort of thing bore me to death; and in fact, I am not up to them, and that's just it.'

'One would think you were a poor little miserable starveling to hear you talk,' shouted Harvey. 'A six foot life-guardsmen not "up" to anything! and the best cricketer and boldest rider to hounds in the county! Who is talking bosh now, Fred?'

'Perhaps I am, and perhaps you are; but it's too much trouble to decide,' yawned Fred, lazily.

And Harvey knew that when his friend culminated to this point, there was no good in talking to him any more. Fred was of the *cui bono* school; good-hearted and honourable, generous, brave, affectionate in grain; but he had spoil

himself by the affectation of indifference, by pretending to be so terribly superior to all the weaknesses of enthusiasm or emotion, and by making believe—and it was only make-believe—that there was nothing in life worth living for. In aid of which philosophy he had put on a lazy, lounging, careless manner, inexpressibly annoying to earnest and energetic people, maintaining that the cultus of nicotine, as he called it, was the only thing worth a sensible man's devotion; though he added a kind of bye altar to Bass.

His friend Harvey Wynn was a very different kind of person. Tall, muscular, broadly proportioned, his face not handsome so much as honest and strong—(Fred Whitfield was allowed to be the handsomest man in the county, and the most elegant in appearance and manners—when he chose)—full of life and spirits and animal energy and vigorous thought, impassioned in a strong manly way, and romantic too, always in earnest, and never frivolous—surely it was only by the law of contrasts that he was the friend of languid, used-up, affected Fred—only by the theory of compensation that the conventional club-man about town found anything harmonious in the country doctor who took life in heroic doses, and even then complained of inanition! But one does sometimes see these odd friendships; and Fred Whitfield loved Harvey Wynn better than he loved any human being, save, perhaps, his mother; and Harvey loved him, but with that sad kind of love which one feels for people who might be so much better than they are if they would but be their truest selves. So it came to pass that Harvey, who was to be groomsman, was invited to Fred's house for the few days now intervening before the marriage took place. He had only just arrived when they had the conversation given above; and as yet had seen neither the old lady, as Fred irreverently called his mother, nor, of course, Miss Blackett, who lived rather more than two miles from the *House*—the Whitfields' place.

His introduction to the mother came first. She was a handsome, stately woman, with the mien and manner of a duchess; a cold, courteous, iron-hearted kind of person, who wore rich black silks and point-lace caps, and despised poverty as on a par with vice and crime. Conventional, proud, cold, worldly—Harvey understood now whence had come the flaw that ran through, and so pitifully marred, the beauty of his friend's nature.

Mrs. Whitfield was very civil, though, to Harvey. She was in too good a humour about this marriage of her planning not to be civil to every one; for Rose Blackett was an heiress, owning now some two thousand a year in her own right, with inheritance to come; and she was glad that she had secured so rich a prize for her son, when others, and men of higher social standing (notably my Lord Marcy Masters and Sir James Ventour), were pretendants in the same field; so that Harvey only felt in a general way the ice and iron of her nature; to himself individually she was all graciousness, of a stately sort, not to say grim.

But one thing he did see, and that was, that she was feverish and overstrained, and looked ill, and as if on the point of breaking down. His profession taught him that; besides having by nature the full use of his eyes.

'I am glad that my mother likes you, old fellow!' said Fred, when she left the table; 'I know her manner so well, I can weigh to an ounce the measure of esteem she gives to any one; and I can tell you—if you care for it—that you are in class number one with her: which makes it more comfortable for me, you know. I hope that Rose will like you too, and then we shall be all right.'

'I hope so too,' said Harvey, laughing. And then they talked of other things.

The next day they went over to Lisson, where the Blacketts lived.

Mrs. Blackett was a meek, mild, inoffensive creature, with weak eyes; always dominated by the last speaker, and given to easy weeping.

She had long been under Mrs. Whitfield's influence, whenever that lady chose to exert it; though, since Rose had grown up, there had sometimes been fierce collisions, when the poor lady had been put to terrific straits, not knowing which sovereign to obey. Fortunately for her, Rose was too fond of liberty to be domineering; and, so long as people would leave her alone, was content to leave them the same. So that, unless when Mrs. Whitfield annoyed her personally, and sought to curtail her individuality, as she chose to phrase it, she let her manage her mamma as much as she liked, and gave no heed to the direction which that management was taking. It was only when Fred asked her to be his wife, saying, 'You see, Rose, the old ladies have made it up between them; but we can't do better, unless you are not for it,' that she understood the meaning of the last few years.

'She did not care much about the matter one way or the other,' she said; 'she liked Fred better than either my Lord Marcy Masters, who was old enough to be her father, or than Sir James Ventour, who was half a fool;' so she said, 'Yes, very well, Fred;' and there the thing rested. And that was about the extent of love-making that had been between them.

While Harvey was 'making himself agreeable' to Mrs. Blackett, Fred Whitfield went out on a roving commission to look for Rose, who was never to be found, like any other young lady, in the drawing-room; but always where she had no business to be—in the stable, or by the dog kennel, or shooting at a mark with a real pistol as she used to say, or practising croquet, or doing something that was not needlework or anything else essentially feminine. A turn of the scale more, and Rose would have been 'fast;' as it was, she was only free. Fred found her, as usual, in the yard, superintending some tremendous proceedings connected with Fan and Fan's puppies, and after their first off-hand greetings (they met more like two young men than a lover and his betrothed), told her who was in the drawing-

room, and asked her if she would go and see him.

'That's your friend come to see you turned off?' she asked. And Fred said yes, it was.

'Oh, very well! of course I'll go,' cried Miss Rose, with just the shadow of a blush on her face, 'but you know, Fred, though I don't care about such things myself, it is terribly like being trotted out for show.'

'Oh! nonsense, Rose,' drawled Fred. 'Harvey's far too good a fellow to have any such disagreeable ideas.' And they went into the drawing-room together.

Certainly Rose Blackett was a very pretty girl. Tall, graceful, and yet with a certain look of personal power about her, which some men like in women, though others repudiate; with large dark eyes of uncertain shade, and thick, rich, glossy hair of the brown that sits next door to black; small hands, now thrust into dog-skin gauntlet gloves; small feet and dainty ankles, which the looped-up purple dress and curt red petticoat showed to full advantage; dangling her hat with its sweeping feather in one hand, while sticking the other into the pocket of her short jacket with the big metal buttons, half blushing and half defiant, she was altogether a 'girl of the period,' after the best models of her kind; just a little too jaunty, perhaps, and a shade too indifferent, but evidently a fine-natured, pure-minded, high-hearted creature, as yet in the block, and unawakened. At a glance Harvey read it all.

'She does not love him,' he said to himself, 'and has never loved.'

The two young men stayed to dinner on Mrs. Blackett's invitation; and, at first amused, then surprised, Harvey ended by being indignant at the cavalier indifference with which Fred treated his betrothed. Indeed, the whole thing was really painful to him; it seemed to be so little earnest, and so devoid of the poetry and passion of love. And he, who thought of marriage as of an earthly heaven, and who would have given all he had in the world to be loved by such a girl as Rose!

'How often it is that people have what they don't prize, and that others would give their lives for!' he said to Fred as they drove home.

'Yes,' said Fred, wearily. 'Some men like love-making and all that bother; I confess I don't.'

'You do not give yourself too much trouble about it,' said Harvey, secretly nettled, but attempting to laugh. 'Of all the indifferent lovers that ever lived I should say you were the most indifferent.'

'It suits Rose,' said Fred; 'and I am sure I do the best I can under the circumstances. It is such a stupid position for a fellow to be in, altogether; and even Rose, though not silly, and not a bit sentimental, dislikes it as much as I do. Did you see how she blushed when she came into the room to see you?'

'I saw she looked very beautiful and rosy,' replied Harvey; 'but I did not notice that she was particularly embarrassed or blushing.'

'No, not embarrassed; she is not the kind of girl for that; but she coloured up.' Which seemed to have impressed the young man as something wonderful; for he spoke of it again before they got home.

When they reached home they found that Mrs. Whitfield had gone to bed, suffering from a slight attack of fever; by to-morrow morning she was decidedly ill; and in a short time dangerously so. It was an attack of nervous fever, and for a time her life was despaired of. Of course the marriage was put off indefinitely now, until she recovered; and, as Harvey Wynn was free, not having yet made a practice anywhere, he agreed to remain in the house in close attendance, until she had passed the crisis, either for life or death.

And this was how it came about that he took up his quarters at the Hawse, and, by consequence, became well acquainted with Rose.

Rose was not merely 'the jolly girl without any nonsense about her' that Fred proclaimed her, and that she ostentatiously proclaimed herself to be, in deed, at least, if not in word. Harvey, who had no love for 'fast' girls, and who had the power of truth to elicit truth,

soon found her out, and told her plainly that she was acting a part which neither became her nor belonged to her. It was all very well, he said, that she should like riding, and be fond of dogs and horses, and even enjoy firing at a mark—though he hoped she might never develop into a sportswoman, clever at killing pheasants, or hares either; but it was nothing but affectation her trying to make herself into the bad imitation of a man, and pretending to be ashamed of herself as a true woman. Women were women, he said; and not all the big buttons or easy-going slang in the world could make them anything else; and, whatever the fast school might say, there was a grace in softness, and a power in love, and an ennobling influence in enthusiasm, not to be had in stables and hunting-fields; 'and womanly work is womanly glory, Miss Blackett,' continued the young doctor, warmly; 'and home is not merely a "place to sleep and feed in," as you say, but the emblem and enclosure of woman's truest life. And all this you ought to feel strongly and enact steadily, because you are strong and steadfast.'

This he said earnestly, for he was too thoroughly manly himself to uphold 'as truly womanly' incapable or imperfect women; and the thing he liked the best in Rose was her power and the dash of manliness in her, which might be turned to such noble account if she would.

'And when you have made me all these fine things,' she said, her eyes kindling as she spoke, but not with enthusiasm, 'what will be the good of it? Much Fred will value me! Much the world will understand me! One gets no good by such subtleties, Mr. Wynn; people do not care for them, so what is the good of them?'

'I am sorry you think so,' Harvey answered. 'I should have expected from one so entire as yourself the recognition of a good for its own sake, quite independent of the sympathy or understanding of the world.'

'One must be understood by some one,' she answered; 'and the more one's nature is called out, the more need of a response.'

Then she blushed—cheek, neck, and brow, all one burning crimson—while her eyes dropped, full of thoughts and feelings better left untold.

Harvey felt his own heart beat with strange violence while he watched the lovely face before him; but he was not a man to show what he ought to hide; so, with an effort, he drove the blood back to its calmer current again, and simply answered: 'The response always comes some time in life, Miss Blackett.'

She raised her eyes to his. 'Is every one happy, then?' she said; 'is every marriage well suited?'

'There are other means of happiness beside marriage, though this is the greatest,' he said; 'a woman's home has generally other loves and other duties beside the one of the husband; and at the worst there are friends.'

'Friends!' she said, scornfully; 'what good are friends to one?'

'You think so? I had hoped for a different verdict,' said Harvey.

'Oh, you are not a mere friend,' cried Rose; 'at least, not the kind of friend I meant,' she added; and again she blushed to the very roots of her hair.

'No; I am more the brother than the mere acquaintance,' Harvey said, in a low voice, altered, too, in its tones, and deep and mellow—'your future husband's brother-friend: I am yours also, am I not?'

'I suppose so,' she answered, coldly, and turned away from him, as if offended.

Something not quite so fiery as wrath, nor so happy as mirth, came into Harvey's eyes as he watched her move away discontentedly, perhaps more hurt than annoyed; but he did not follow her, and in a few moments she came back to him, smiling as usual, as if she had done battle with the evil spirit within her and had driven him out.

But when Harvey parted with her that day, she went into her own room and wept as if her heart would break; and he, for the first time in his life, felt inclined to hate Fred Whitfield, and to curse his blindness and fatuity.

Had it not been for the young

doctor, Mrs. Whitfield's life would not have been worth many hours' purchase. More than once during her illness he had dragged her out of the very jaws of death, and had now so far recovered her that the wedding-day was again discussed, and only waited Harvey's sanction for the invalid to risk the fatigue and excitement consequent.

'Oh, bother the marriage!' said Fred, taking his mother's hand. 'Rose is a dear, good girl, and will wait till doomsday, rather than you should risk anything, mother. There is no hurry, and we can wait quite well until you are strong; can't we, Harvey?'

'Very well indeed, I should think,' Harvey answered, with an almost imperceptible dash of sarcasm in his voice; 'but it is not good for your mother to be anxious; and she seems to be anxious to conclude this affair. Of course it can be nothing to me,' he added hastily. 'I have no purpose of my own to serve in the delay or the conclusion.'

He had thought. As it was to be, it was better concluded with all decent speed, he said to himself; and then he, at least, would be out of danger. She, perhaps, needed no such precaution; and yet—those blushes of hers, and that eager tremulous face had awakened strange thoughts in him. Hush! he must not dream such dreams. What would he think of himself, a poor, penniless, country doctor, if he came here as his friend's almost brother, and, in return for his love, broke off his marriage with an heiress, and secured her for himself? The thought brought the blood into his face, and made him loathe himself, as dishonoured in soul, for even harbouring such a vision.

So it was arranged that the settlements should be signed, and that next week the marriage should actually take place, Mrs. Whitfield's health not preventing. And when Rose was told this, she wept again; and, to her mother's intense dismay, burst out with, 'Mamma, I will not marry Fred Whitfield!'—an announcement which that fine lady put down to insanity, as the mildest term.

The day following this decision Fred could not go over to Lisson; he was detained on some business or other at home; so the young doctor rode over, with a note containing a request for the two ladies to dine at the Hawse this evening, seeing that on this side one was disabled and the other detained, and no intercourse possible unless they would kindly come.

'Certainly,' said Mrs. Blackett, a little nervously, glancing at her daughter, who, with her head thrown up, stood sideways to her.

'And you, Miss Blackett?' asked Harvey.

'Oh, by all means!' said Miss Rose, not quite pleasantly, at least to her mother's ears. 'I want to speak to Fred very seriously.'

'My dear!' remonstrated Mrs. Blackett; and then she left the room.

'What has happened?' asked Harvey, impulsively.

'Oh, nothing,' answered Rose; she was standing now in the bay-window, looking out into the garden, so that her face was not seen. 'I have only told mamma that I am not going to marry Fred; and she is put out.'

Harvey reeled like one struck. Had his senses played him false?

'Indeed!' he then said, after a long pause; 'your determination is sudden, Miss Blackett.'

'Yes,' she answered, with assumed carelessness; but her quivering voice and bashful eyes belied her assumption. 'Now that it has come so near, I feel that it will not do; and I am sure Fred will feel with me.'

Again Harvey was silent. What could he say? that he thought Fred would consent to give her up, being utterly unworthy his good fortune? that he hoped he would keep her still to her word, when he hoped just the reverse? that she was doing wrong to be honest, when he loved her for it more than he had ever loved her before? What could he say? Truth and honour were on opposite sides, as sometimes happens in life; and if he said what he thought, he would say what he ought not to say. So he kept

silence; and Rose was not quick enough to divine why.

While they were standing in this awkward position, both too much moved to speak, a carriage dashed up to the door, and 'Mr. Norton' was announced. Mr. Norton was Rose's trustee and guardian, in a way; though that young lady had full power over her own funds, and did not in general either ask advice as to what she should do with her own, or defer to it, if given. And being of the school which 'goes in' for a great many things better left alone, she 'went in' for speculation, on a tolerably large scale; so that, since she came of age, she had placed most of her money out at nurse, so said; but she had chosen, unfortunately for her, the most capricious nurse of all — mining property. However, she would do it; so she had no one to blame but herself. Not even smooth-spoken, cleanly-shaven Mr. Norton; who had helped her, by-the-by, to more than one 'good thing,' in which he himself had taken shares that he generously handed over to her, after private advices received and pondered over. And when Mr. Norton came Harvey left, bearing with him the promise that the two ladies would come to dinner at half-past six precisely. As much before as they liked, but not a moment after.

When they came it was easy to see that something had happened. Mrs. Blackett was depressed, tearful; her eyes were red and swollen, her face puffed and pale; she spoke as if she had a violent cold, and in every other particular of manner and person showed that she had been weeping bitterly. Rose was flushed and excited, with a certain bravery of manner which trembled too nearly on bravado to be quite as lovely as might have been. But she looked beautiful — perhaps more beautiful than she had ever looked in her life before; and even lazy Fred seemed struck by her, and warmed up to unwonted feeling.

After dinner she asked him to go with her into the library; for she was utterly unconventional in all she did, and would not have minded asking a prince to tie her shoe, or

anything else that she might desire, being just a little touched by the self-will belonging to the heiress; and Fred assented, wondering what was up, and what she wanted. When she had shut the door, 'Dear old Fred,' she said, in a coaxing voice, 'I want you to do me a kindness.'

'I am sure I will, Rose,' said Fred, naturally, and without his drawl.

'You do like me, don't you, now?'

'Why, yes; of course I do. I think you the best girl going,' answered Fred, opening his eyes.

'And would not like to hurt or distress me?'

'By Jove! no,' he cried. 'I should think not, indeed!'

She was standing by the fire, leaning one hand on the chimney-piece, with the other just lifting her dark-blue gown over her ankle, her foot on the fender, showing her pink silk stocking, bronze slipper, and a bit of broad needlework as a flounce above.

'Well, I will take you at your word,' said Rose. 'I want you to give me up, Fred, and break off the marriage. Come, now; are you a good enough old fellow for that?' very coaxingly.

'Break off the marriage, Rose!' cried Fred, all in amaze. 'Are you dreaming?'

'Not a bit of it,' she answered, laughing a little hysterically; 'quite serious and wide awake.'

'But I cannot give you up, Rose,' said Fred. 'My mother has set her heart on the marriage; and it is so near, too, now; and I do love you—a great deal more than I have said or shown,' he added, stirred out of his affectation. 'You know, Rose, how I hate the idea of sentimentality or spooneyism with any one; and I have fought off that as long and as well as I could. But I am not the indifferent beast you may think me. I do love you, Rose, and I cannot give you up.'

She had turned quite pale during her lover's speech. 'Well, Fred,' she then said, 'of course I am very much obliged to you, and all that; but I have not been playing a part,

and I do not feel a bit more than I have shown; so that we are not on equal terms, if you love me so deeply as you say; and I am simply in the old way of good-fellowship. Mind that, and never reproach me hereafter; for I have told you the truth, remember. And as for your lady mother, I don't think she will make much objection when she knows all, because, dear old Fred, I am ruined.'

'Good God, Rose!' cried Fred; 'what on earth do you mean?'

'Well, you know I have been going in for speculating; and so Mr. Norton came down to tell me to-day that all my great expectations are come to nothing; the Bella Juanita mines are drowned; and I have not what will realize two hundred a year instead of two thousand. And so I think the question of Mrs. Whitfield's consent is settled, is it not?'

'Now, then, Rose, I will not give you up for any one in the world,' said Fred, in a deep voice. 'My mother may say what she likes, and you may say what you like—the marriage shall go on; this day week you are my wife, come what may! I never felt how much I loved you before to-day, Rose, when there has been just a chance of losing you.'

'But if I don't want to marry you, Fred?' urged Rose, touched, in spite of herself, by the unusual warmth and chivalry of the man.

'Oh, bosh!' said Fred. 'You are not the girl to have been engaged for three months contentedly enough, and then turn round just at the last moment, and say you don't care for the fellow. I quite understand you, Rose, dear old lassie! You think that my mother will not like the match so much now as when you had money, and that you are not the catch you were before you had lost it; and so you would release me. But I will not be released, Rose; and so I'll tell my mother when she speaks to me about it, if she takes that tone at all.'

Upon which Rose did what was a most extraordinary thing in her to do—what Fred had never before seen the slightest inclination in her towards him—she flung her arms

round his neck and kissed him ; and then burst into a violent flood of tears, which soon passed into hysterics : when he was obliged to call the servants and Harvey Wynn.

So now the whole thing came out, both to Mrs. Whitfield and to Harvey : Fred had no idea of making mysteries and keeping secrets unnecessarily ; but he noticed two things as the result of his communication, that his mother looked decidedly displeased, and as if she had made up her mind in a different direction to his, and, perhaps, with more stability ; and that Harvey, whose face had lighted up with strange passion, suddenly burnt himself out, and became cold, and ashen, and 'odd.' But Fred Whitfield was not remarkable for penetration ; so the coil coiled itself a turn tighter, and no one seemed likely to get out of the rounds, or to be free of its strands. Rose could do no more than she had done ; Fred could do no less ; and for once in her life his mother was powerless, and he flatly refused to obey her. His nature had been ploughed up for the first time, and the weeds had been cut down and the good seed had sprung up. Rose Blackett, however, and Harvey Wynn were as miserable as it often falls to the lot of people to be by the virtues of another. If Fred would only have been selfish and narrow-hearted, how many days and nights of suffering would have been saved !

The time was coming very near, now ; it wanted only three days to the wedding, and none but Fred was content. Mrs. Whitfield was coldly savage, and declared she would not appear at the church or breakfast either. Conditions were changed, she said, since the engagement was made ; and Rose Blackett, who had once been well enough, was no fit match now for the owner of the Hawse ; Mrs. Blackett was in a state of chronic tearfulness, which made her poor eyes very bad ; Rose was broken up out of all likeness to her former self, and her attempts at the old high-handed 'fastness' failed signally ; Harvey was moody, irritable, feverish, uncertain ; and the whole octave rang with an under-

tone of discord, which no one saw any means of preventing ; it not being always possible for one's fingers to strike the true key.

The three friends were riding along the lane leading up to Lisson ; Rose and Fred in front, and Harvey at some little distance behind—the lane being too narrow for three abreast. Fred was talking about Thursday next (it was Monday now), and talking naturally and lovingly—for somehow he had forgotten his drawl of late—when they heard a terrific plunging in the rear, and then a heavy fall, as Harvey's horse—a wild, fiery, nervous brute—flung him suddenly to the ground, taking him at a moment of inattention when he was riding with a slack rein and his mind far away ; so that he was thrown in a second, almost at the first start and plunge the terrified brute had made—frightened at an idiot lad of the place starting up from behind the hedge, yelling and flinging his arms abroad.

In another moment, Rose Blackett, throwing her reins wildly to Fred, was kneeling by his side, holding his head against her bosom, and calling him her 'Beloved Harvey,' which he, stunned as he was, and unable to reply, was not too insensible to hear and understand.

The carriage was sent for from Lisson, and the poor fellow, bleeding and terribly shaken, was taken to the house to be set to rights as soon as possible ; and while they were carrying him through the hall Rose turned to Fred, who stood leaning against the lintel of the door, and nearly as pale as the wounded man, but a great deal more wretched.

'It has come out, Fred,' she said, laying her hand on his shoulder, the tears in her eyes, but with a more contented expression of face than she had had of late. 'I am very sorry for you, especially as you have seemed to like me so much more really than you did ; but I cannot help it.'

'You are a dear good girl, Rose,' said Fred ; 'and I have been a fool. But it serves me right. When I was master of the situation I fooled away

my opportunity; and now, when I would die to be loved by you, Rose, you have gone off to another.' He tried to smile, but his lips quivered, and he was obliged to turn away his head.

'Never mind, Fred,' said Rose. 'You will find some one else better suited to you, and more worthy of you than I am; and perhaps you will come to me some day, and say, "Rose, you have been the best friend I ever had in my life," when you have a sweet little wife that you adore.'

'I don't quite think that,' said poor Fred; 'but if you are happy, that will be something. At all events you are a dear, good girl; and I love you more than you know of, or would perhaps believe. But that is nothing to the purpose

now; I have lost you, when I might have won you if I had been wise.'

They shook hands cordially, and parted; and the next day Fred left the Hawse, and soon after went abroad. Rose and he did not meet again till many years after her marriage with Harvey; and when they did, Fred was really married to the 'dearest little woman under the sun,' and Rose was a handsome matron, superintending her nursery instead of the kennel, and finding her children rather more interesting objects of care than Fan's puppies of olden time. She had saved altogether about four hundred a year out of the wreck of the grand Bella Juanita silver mines; and so on the whole did not do badly in life. Happiness has been found at even a lower 'figure.'







Drawn by M. Ellen Edwards]

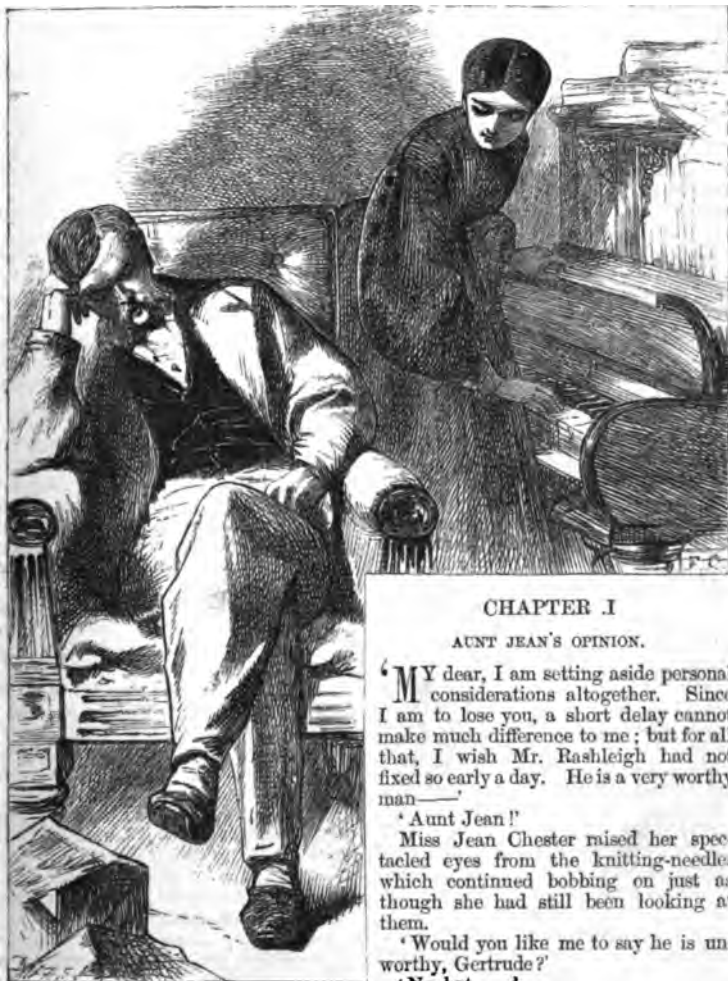
MAGDALEN.

[See "The Ordeal for Wives."

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THE STORY OF NOEL RASHLEIGH'S WEDDING.



CHAPTER I

AUNT JEAN'S OPINION.

'MY dear, I am setting aside personal considerations altogether. Since I am to lose you, a short delay cannot make much difference to me; but for all that, I wish Mr. Rashleigh had not fixed so early a day. He is a very worthy man——'

'Aunt Jean!'

Miss Jean Chester raised her spectacled eyes from the knitting-needles which continued bobbing on just as though she had still been looking at them.

'Would you like me to say he is unworthy, Gertrude?'

'No, but——'

'Very well. Of course it's not a romantic way of speaking, but when people come to Mr. Rashleigh's age——'

'Aunt Jean, Mr. Rashleigh is only seven-and-thirty.'

'And you are twenty-one. I am perfectly well aware of the disparity, my dear; you need not enforce it. But if you interrupt me so often, I shall never get on with what I had to say. Mr. Rashleigh is a very worthy man, but he is a confirmed bachelor as to his habits. I can see that with half an eye. He is not fit to have the care of such an unformed madcap as you are. You are as wild as a young kitten, and as heedless. He will be letting you go your own way while he goes his; a bad arrangement always, but for such as you—ruinous. I wish he would wait a bit.'

'Why, you have just said he is too old already.'

'That is your perverse way of putting it. I say you are too young for him, which is different. He ought to know you better, and you ought to put yourself into training. Take my word for it, Gerty, your life isn't going to be all roses in that out-of-the-way country village.'

That out-of-the-way country village! A smile stole over the niece's face as she watched the knitting-needles which seemed to say the words over and over again in Miss Chester's rapid fingers. Why, the most attractive feature in all that unknown expanse that stretched out before her—Noel, of course, excepted—was this delightful country village of which her aunt spoke so slightly.

'It isn't out of the way, Aunt Jean, for a country village; it isn't many miles from the county town. And just imagine the fun of going amongst those queer farming people, seeing their ways, actually living amongst them, and making hay!'

'Haymaking will be over,' said Miss Chester, grimly.

'Well, but it will come again next year.'

'And if you think you are going to find anything to make fun of in those "queer farmers," as you call them, I can tell you it is a mistaken notion. Farmers in these days don't wear drab highlows and smockfrocks; neither do they say "Dang my buttons," and "Measter," except in books. We have accepted the old book type of farmer till he has become a sort of institution; nevertheless, in real life he is pretty nearly extinct.'

'You cannot suppose I meant to do anything of the sort,' said Gertrude, hotly. 'Why, Noel himself is only a retired farmer.'

Miss Chester laughed.

'On the strength of having spoiled

his land and impoverished himself with a sublimate, or a phosphate, or some other uncomfortable cranky chemical of which I know nothing. Fortunate for him that he was an only son, and fortunate for his farm that he had sense enough to let it.'

'George says Noel is the cleverest man he ever met.'

'Clever, is he? Well, for my part I can't see what people want to play at being tradesmen for. If he must be always at those chemical tricks, why didn't he serve his apprenticeship and get a shop, and then he might have stood a chance of knowing something, instead of doing mischief.'

'Aunt Jean, you don't understand. Noel is an amateur.'

'Well, if that means a lover, I suppose he is, at present,' responded Miss Chester, drily. 'But take care he doesn't tire of his new plaything and go back to the sublimate.'

Miss Chester having said this, put down her knitting, took off her spectacles, went up to her niece with great deliberation, and kissed her.

But Gertrude was unresponsive. The sharp sentence seemed to her as unjust as it was unkind; it had hurt her so much that she was afraid of turning her face to those eyes which had in reality little need of spectacles.

'Gertrude,' said Miss Chester, 'that speech was about as unkind and cruel as one as I could have made to a poor little girl under your circumstances. Don't resent it, however. I am out of sorts. I was a lonely old maid before your brother brought you to me; do you think I shall be less lonely now when you are gone?'

Gertrude responded, with an impulsive clinging to the hand which rested now so gently on her head, 'Aunt Jean, come and live with us.'

Again Miss Chester was tempted to be caustic. It is so hard for a shrewd observant keenness to refrain from uttering the satire that springs so readily to the lips. She shook her head gravely, however.

'My dear, if you wish it now, you would soon blame me if I were to yield to such a thing. You two are going to enter the lists for happiness, and must have no spy to see how you begin your battle with the world.'

Gertrude Chester made no answer to this. There was in her own mind a little shadowy consciousness that she had not wished her random request to be granted, and therefore there was a tiny atom of insincerity about it.

'At least, you will come and see us?'

'To be sure I will.'

'And you will find that in the country I shall do as the country does.'

'What's that, Gertrude? Scamper over the fields after wild flowers and watercress? Well, I love the country too; who doesn't? Remember this, however. I come to see you, but not uninvited. I can't have my unimportant person made into a tiresome ogre who may pounce down upon you at all seasons, unexpected and unwelcome. Those surprises have strange elements of discord in them.'

The niece would have uttered a disclaimer, but Miss Chester put a finger on her lips and bade her go away to bed and sleep, for it was getting late, and there was work in store for to-morrow.

But as to whether Gertrude was in any great hurry to follow this advice, those on the eve of so great and solemn an event as she was, an event which is to change the whole character of life, may judge.

There was so much to think of, so much to resolve upon. There were so many loyal vows of self-devotion to Noel's happiness to be registered. Aunt Jean may be right as to his having chosen a childish wife; unlearned, and poor, and childish; she was all these; but yet, as she decided, with a little flush of enthusiasm, not quite ignorant, not altogether a plaything, or useless. She could do a great deal, she thought, in that primitive village wherein her brother was curate. Not that she looked forward to his help, much. She had grand ideas of her own as to the wonderful things to be accomplished. There would be a Sunday school to teach at, or she might get up a school of her own; and then there were the poor people to be visited. To be sure Noel did not seem to know or be interested much about them, but he was so much occupied. And she could soon find out for herself all she wanted to know. And then she must make friends with those farmers about whom Aunt Jean had been so cross. And farmers were usually, she thought—though, of course, rustic and delightful—rather a stupid set of people; behind the age, probably; taking no interest in schools and charities, and a hundred other matters into which she meant to put her inexperienced little fingers.

And at this juncture a carriage rolled by in which she, leaning out of the open window, saw a cloud of muslin and lace; and had a vision of bouquets,

opera cloaks, and wreaths. And she remembered with a feeling of superiority that at one time she used to look with longing envy on such sights as that. How different it was now! How much nobler an ambition had replaced that dream of foolish vanity! How useful and good and quiet her life was going to be in the peaceful country, remote from this noise and riot of dissipation which had no longer any charm for her! All round the rosy horizon there was nothing but unflecked brightness; no cloud, no sign of so much as a shower; nothing but peace.

CHAPTER II.

MR. NOEL RASHLEIGH.

Meanwhile Mr. Noel Rashleigh was cutting across the country at a speed of some thirty miles an hour back to his home in the out-of-the-way village. His thoughts should, as a matter of course, have been pleasant; and if the question had been put to him as he first took his seat in the railway carriage, he would have answered unhesitatingly that they were pleasant. In Gertrude's society, or just fresh from it, he would have confessed with a comical helplessness that she had bewitched him; and even the occasional dry humour exhibited by the aunt failed in its confusing effect when Gertrude was by.

If, however, he had also been asked how so unlikely a circumstance as his engagement to Gertrude had ever taken place, his answer might not have come so readily. In effect, it often puzzled himself. It seemed to him a sort of unlooked-for event, chargeable upon locality and accident, since he felt sure that in his own residence, or amongst the surroundings that were connected in his mind with far different pursuits from that of love-making, such a thing would never have entered his head. He was, as might be inferred from Aunt Jean's strictures, devoted to chemistry—an alluring pursuit, doubtless, especially if there be grafted upon it the least suspicion of alchemical utopianism, and a floating dream or two concerning the philosopher's stone. Mr. Rashleigh might not have acknowledged that any such dreams troubled him, or that he did at enthusiastic moments discern somewhere, in the vast region of possibilities, the inviting glimmer of an *aurum philosophicum*. He might never have left the Elysian fields of philosophical bachelordom, but for a chance by which he and the curate—a new

arrival in the parish—became intimate; and this chance was the discovery that the curate had in his possession certain rare folios, possibly handed down to him from a bibliomane ancestor. These books he, the Rev. George Chester, was ready enough to lend, confessing, however, that they were unintelligible to himself. The admission fell upon dull ears. The prizes treated upon the transmutation of metals; and Noel talked to the curate as though the latter had been as widely acquainted with analytical and experimental chemistry as he fancied he was himself. Out of these books, then, and a vivid admiration which the somewhat slow intellect of Mr. Chester conceived for the philosophical genius, a friendship sprang up, which resulted in a proposal from the curate that Noel should accompany him on a visit he was about to pay to his aunt and sister in London.

Mr. Rashleigh at first declined; then suddenly some thought of the British Museum crossed his mind, and he withdrew his refusal. George Chester neither knew nor cared for the motive which led to this vacillation of purpose. He was proud of his friend, and glad of an opportunity to introduce him to Gertrude and his aunt. George himself was not brilliant, and for this reason, perhaps, he liked to seek and to be sought by those whom he considered above the average. It soothed his consciousness of personal mediocrity and gratified him.

The result of the visit has been seen. Mr. Rashleigh went but little to the British Museum. The thing was very wonderful, but not less true for that. He was taken captive by this child-like sister of the curate, whose very childishness came to him like fresh flowers to an invalid, or sunlight to a man long blinded. It dazzled him. She sang like the happiest bulbul that ever charmed a moonlight listener; she was full of wilful tricks, which she did with all the grace of mock propriety. How the end came about, Noel could not tell. He only knew that he found her one morning cooing over some flowers that George had given her, and positively passing her lips backwards and forwards over them as she arranged them on the breakfast-table.

'They are so sweet,' said Gertrude, apologetically, 'and I have so few flowers. I dare say you in the country have so many that they are scarcely precious at all.'

Noel was not thinking of the flowers, or the childish action of fondling them.

It is to be supposed that the quick, universal impulse had overcome this strong-minded philosopher; for what followed was to him a very vague remembrance. When he came to himself he knew that he had laid all the beauties he could claim or procure of country life at her feet, if she would only accept them. *How* he had done it was another thing; awkwardly, of course, but that mattered little; it was done. And then the marvellous novelty of his sensations at finding that Gertrude was actually happy in his confession! It was true that her happiness seemed to be mixed with an awful reverence for him; still that it was happiness he could not doubt; and for the time he flung chemistry to the winds, and was happy too. He was not, however, learned enough in woman's nature to understand the sudden gravity that came over Gertrude, and seemed to sober her all at once from the madcap Miss Chester, and called her into the thoughtful woman.

'Aunt Jean will tell you dreadful tales about me,' said Gertrude, not without a hesitating fear for the result. 'And indeed I am afraid I have deserved all that she will say. But I am not going to be wilful any more; everything is so—'

'So what?'

'So very different now. I—you know, Mr. Rashleigh, I had nothing to give up being wilful for.'

She said it as if entreating him to be lenient in his judgment of those dreadful things which Aunt Jean would say; and Noel laughed, for Miss Chester and her opinions were of very secondary importance to him just then. He got over his interview with that formidable lady as soon as possible, and emerged from it with an oppressive idea of spectacles that had seemed to be looking through to his backbone, and knitting-needles which had bobbed out sharp speeches at him till he was almost bewildered. Aunt Jean had nevertheless been on the whole tolerably propitious, and Noel was satisfied. It was all very strange and wonderful; wonderful to think that Gertrude cared for him, and that he, Noel Rashleigh, had made so decided a plunge into the unknown sea which, for anything he knew, might be full of ruinous rocks and breakers. He looked at himself in the glass and thought how ugly he was. He rubbed his hands over his forehead, and wished for a moment that he could rub out that deep wrinkle from between the eyebrows, but he couldn't; and then he laughed

at himself, and went to take his leave of Gertrude for that time, and to stipulate that he should be allowed to come again soon, and that the wedding should not be long delayed.

This stipulation had to be made to Aunt Jean; and, in obedience to some masonic signal which Noel did not understand, Gertrude left the room as he made it, and he was again alone with Miss Chester. The wedding! As he spoke of it he actually felt the red in his dark cheek, and turned stammering from the keen eyes watching him.

Aunt Jean, however, had something to say which she conceived it her duty to say; and under such circumstances it was not her habit to relent.

'Mr. Rashleigh,' said the old lady, 'you are going to take away a spoiled child who is very dear to me. You will not be offended if I speak to you plainly?'

'Offended? No, certainly not.'

'When a man gives himself up to one pursuit, to which he gives up the whole of his time and energy, it is apt to become a second nature grafted upon the first; so that he is unlikely to consider those trifles which make the sum of human things, and go to the fulfilment of domestic happiness. Mr. Rashleigh, Gertrude is very young; in reality, though not in years, she is a mere child. I beseech you to take thought for her.'

'Madam,' replied Noel, looking at her with hazy, uncomprehending eyes, 'her happiness shall be my dearest care.'

And Miss Chester, reading perfectly the expression of his face, knew that it would be hopeless to say any more.

We left Mr. Rashleigh, however, in the railway carriage on his return home after that memorable last visit before the wedding, the day for which had been fixed. As the distance increased between himself and Gertrude the echoes of her voice ceased to haunt him; and by the time he reached his own house his meditations concerning some little alterations he had proposed to himself therein were oddly mixed with a wonder whether a certain pamphlet ordered before he left home had arrived in his absence.

He went to the study or laboratory, the construction of which had excited the village wonder some few years ago, when he finally gave up the farm on which his father had grown wealthy. A packet that met his eye was inimical to the alterations; they could be made at any time; and he was eager to dip

into this new treatise on an old subject.

The voice of his future brother-in-law roused him from a long fit of absorption, and he started up only half awakened from his reverie—one of those reveries concerning which Gertrude already knew something—very little yet, and which she afterwards took to call 'sublimates,' with that rueful sort of jesting which smothers a sigh.

'Oh, I was coming to you, George,' said Mr. Rashleigh, bringing himself back with a jerk. 'It's to be next week—Wednesday—you can come, I suppose?'

'Yes; I shall run up the day before. How did you leave them?'

'Very well.'

'And from London you go—where?'

'Go!' repeated Mr. Rashleigh, puzzled; 'oh, I see. Yes. Upon my word I am not sure that we fixed decidedly. To the north, I think it will be.'

'The lakes? Very nice to be you,' said the curate, with a half sigh. 'I must go. I only looked in upon you in passing.'

And Mr. Rashleigh, left alone, fingered the leaves of that treatise a little longer, and then closed it, and went to walk up and down on his lawn, that he might think.

Yes, it would be very nice; George was right about that. Very nice to have a bright little fairy singing about the lonely house, and making it merry with her own lightheartedness. Very nice when he left his study to find her waiting for him, ready to talk or to be silent; to sit as she had sat for a little while the evening before, with her head resting on his shoulder and her hand in his; or to walk with him about those fields on which he had tried his unsuccessful experiments, and which were now let to his neighbour, Mr. Frankton.

Noel Rashleigh spent the next half-hour as a lover should have spent it, and then with a sudden practical thought he turned back into the house, and wrote to the county town for the very best piano which could be furnished at a short notice from a provincial warehouse.

CHAPTER III.

WHAT THE PARISH SAID.

'I'll never believe it. As for the first report of the marriage, Mr. Rashleigh is much too sensible a man to do such a thing; and for the second—'

The speaker stopped. It was as though the very enormity of that second report took her breath away. She, Mrs. Rodington Haye, was calling upon her neighbour, Mrs. Frankton, and the two ladies, having strolled into the garden, were supposed to be admiring the flowers.

'As for the second instalment of the report,' proceeded Mrs. Haye, deliberately, 'it is simply laughable.'

'Like most reports, to be accepted, if accepted at all, with a reservation,' responded her companion.

Mrs. Rodington Haye glanced from the scarlet geranium, whose faded blossoms her friend was cutting off, towards the spot where the chimneys of Mr. Rashleigh's house seemed to blend with the church-tower.

'Then the marriage also must be nonsense. A girl of eighteen! Why, it is absolutely ridiculous.'

'That I had from Mr. Chester himself,' replied Mrs. Frankton, 'so of course it is true. And I don't see exactly why it is ridiculous. I am not sure about her age being eighteen; I only know that she is very young.'

'You had it from Mr. Chester?'

'Yes. The wedding takes place this week, I believe.'

Mrs. Haye—she was very particular about that final *e*: it distinguished her from the commoner Hays to be found in the provincial town—indulged in a speculative grimace. Of course Mr. Rashleigh had a right to be married if he liked, and without consulting his neighbours; nevertheless there was some slight feeling of aggrievement astir amongst them. They had a sort of vested interest in him as a bachelor. More than once he had lent the lawn before his house as a croquet-ground; and although Mrs. Haye herself cared nothing about croquet, yet she did like the liberty and license with which on such occasions she went through Noel's rooms, examined his furniture, and, in common with others, made herself perfectly at home in them. It was very useful to have such a house in the parish; and of course, if a mistress came to it, all that would be altered. But as to the second bit of gossip—whisper it gently—how it could possibly have arisen, who first made it up, or heard it, or dreamt it, no one could find out. If it were not for the exertions of Captains Speke and Grant, I might perhaps say, as well try to discover the source of the Nile; but that platitude has been robbed of its point.

The report was, then, that the new

Mrs. Rashleigh intended to take the lead in the parish.

'It has been traced to the Liales,' said Mrs. Haye, somewhat inconsequently as to the foregoing conversation, but apropos of the report; 'and Mrs. Liale cannot tell exactly where she heard it first. Take the lead, indeed! Upon my word, it is too absurd for comment. Young ladies in these days do certainly not know their place. I suppose she is going to reform us all. Take the lead!'

Mrs. Haye, being the widow of a professional man, and possessing an independent fortune, arrogated to herself a certain importance in the parish, which was conceded, partly perhaps to a self-assertive power, and partly to a very uncertain temper.

'The marriage itself is, no doubt, an intrigue between the curate and his sister,' she proceeded. 'Everybody knows how poorly the clergy provide for their children—and just think of the seams of Mr. Chester's coats! Of course this is altogether admirable for them both.'

'I think you go a little too far,' ventured Mrs. Frankton.

Her visitor stooped, and laid one yellow kid finger on the faded geranium.

'The thing is—are we to notice her?'

Mrs. Haye's tone was solemn and impressive, and the speech altogether had a magnificent sound. Underneath it there was an uneasy, resentful doubt lest, in the innumerable divisions which do so singularly intersect the classes with lives difficult to comprehend, the new Mrs. Rashleigh should think herself above her neighbours in the social scale.

Something of this must have cropped out; for Mrs. Frankton, looking upon the yellow kid finger, broke into a laugh of genuine amusement.

'At any rate,' she said, 'as we have hitherto been very good friends with Mr. Rashleigh, I suppose we shall be neighbourly enough to call.'

Some unhappy thread had surely got entangled in the fabric of poor Gertrude's fate, and had been enwoven with it. Prejudice had crept on before her, and was already doing her incalculable mischief. If these gossipers would only have stopped to consider the actual foundation for their decisions! But that is a thing seldom done.

'Oh! I dare say she will be trying to visit at Sir James Field's, and possibly with Lord Cavendish himself. We cannot keep up with that sort of thing, you know.'

Again Mrs. Frankton laughed. 'Upon my word,' she said, 'I am quite tired of Mrs. Noel Rashleigh before I have seen her. She has had more than could be compressed into nine ordinary days already. How do you think my rose-hedge looks?'

CHAPTER IV.

HER IMPRESSION.

It was a somewhat dreary morning in November, that month which is so unfairly maligned as suicidal, and which is so often one of the mildest and most agreeable months in the latter half of the year.

Gertrude Rashleigh left her seat at the breakfast-table with some haste, and knelt down at a low window which she threw open, leaning over the stone sill outside. The proximate cause for this change of posture must have been the approaching footsteps of a servant or the departing ones of Mr. Rashleigh, or perhaps both, since the expression of Mrs. Rashleigh's face was not one which would have borne the scrutiny of servants' eyes.

She listened to the noisy removal of the breakfast service, and once or twice had an impulsive desire to beg for less violent demonstrations on the remover's part; but she restrained herself. It is a humiliating fact for a mistress to confess, but Mrs. Rashleigh was afraid of her servants. This morning she was afraid of everything. She was so lonely, and wretched, and low-spirited, that it was hard to keep back the tears, and gulp down the lump in her throat, a giving way to which would, she reflected, be so very childish. She scolded herself, instead of thus giving way. What did she want? Had she not all, and more than all, that could possibly be desired? Was not her husband kindness itself; and had she ever heard a harsh word from his lips? Never! Perhaps it was early days for that yet; and perhaps also, in the midst of her self-scolding, the shutting of the distant door of his laboratory fell upon her ear with a blank, chilly reminder of the desolate and aimless day before her. A day like yesterday, and the day before, and, oh! so many days before, that she could hardly remember when they began, and certainly could not look forward to the time when they would end.

And then her thoughts wandered back to the first few days of her life in this new home. How happy they were! How constantly Noel had been with

her! What pleasant walks they had taken together about the fields, and down under the willows by the river-side. And he had started a project of a boat, in which he was to row her to the ruins of an old abbey a few miles lower down the river; and George was to go with them and make a picnic of it. And the cooing of wood-pigeons was in her ear again; the rippling of the clear beautiful water, as the willow branches kissed it; and she saw again the great pink beds of wild geranium, and the wild yellow iris, the foxgloves, forget-me-nots, and countless wild flowers growing in the coverts by the river. In the fields, too, the startled pheasants ran from the path, scarcely fearing her sufficiently to fly outright. And then the rabbits and hares, and the thousands of birds with their marvellous songs—all new to her! But, above all, Noel had been there.

And the wife of a few months roused herself, for a great hot tear had fallen on her hand, and more threatened to come—a shower more like July than November; hot and thundery.

'I won't do it,' said Mrs. Rashleigh, passionately. 'I will not—it's wicked.'

And so tear after tear fell, and was wiped away with angry vehemence, and still they persisted in coming.

'Aunt Jean, Aunt Jean, what would you say to me now? Oh, I wish I had some one to scold me for being so wicked and ungrateful!'

But Aunt Jean would never come uninvited, and how was it possible to invite her, when she would see and know all? All what?

It would have been difficult for Gertrude to answer that. And it seemed useless to try to rouse herself from these musings, since there was nothing at all, that she knew of, for her to do.

She had got tired of those long, rambling walks which had been rather pleasant when first Noel began to turn towards that ugly door and leave her to herself; besides it was not the season for them.

What *could* she do? Something must be wrong in herself; what was it?

Mrs. Rashleigh drew a stool to the window and took a piece of work from her work-table. She was going to be good and useful. But, alas! she could have found few better misery accelerators than the needle. There were so many associations connected with it; so many of Aunt Jean's dry remarks as to her niece's long stitches and short progress. The needle was very bright at first, but it grew dim; she could not see

it at all: then it split into a dozen needles. And she threw down the work and set herself to think.

We may as well go back with her along her brief experience of married life, since we know as yet nothing about it.

It seemed to have been a series of false or unfortunate steps, from which those neighbours whom she was so anxious to conciliate drew, without of course meaning to be cruel, cruel conclusions.

She remembered her first Sunday at church, where everything was so different from what she had been accustomed to, that, but for the novelty, it would have made her miserable at once.

The better part of the congregation came in as they would have entered a concert-room, or any other place of public entertainment; speaking over the seats to their friends, some even shaking hands, and then taking a deliberate survey of all those who had been previously seated, before they settled themselves for the performance (*sic*). The word must be excused; it was one which occurred with an almost hysterical affection of remorse to the bride herself, who sat in a shady corner of her ugly square pew, shrinking from all those eyes which were turned so mercilessly upon her.

Then came those lower in the social scale, and they strolled in by twos and threes, and took their places stolidly with open mouths and staring eyes, as though they had no very exact idea of what was about to take place, but whatever it might be, they were not to be shaken from their heavy blankness of indifference.

Moreover, so that the arrivals were over before the sermon began, it did not seem to matter much about the other parts of the service; and the constant disturbance of those clanking iron-heeled country boots—in rustic parlance donkey-shod—and the heavy, swaying gait which seemed to bring each foot down with the whole weight of the body above it, all had a perfectly novel and bewildering effect upon Mrs. Rashleigh.

Also, it was her unhappy fate to be musical; and the dreadfully ornate chants and long dreary hymns, all in that inimitable nasal twang of Sunday-school children, which must be heard to be appreciated, tried her sorely.

During the sermon some one snored very audibly behind her, and taking

courage to glance round, a vision of open mouths and closed eyes caused her to turn again quickly and keep close in her corner. The wonder was that Noel sat so gravely composed and tranquil at her side; but then he was used to it.

Her comments on the subject afterwards struck him as so novel and amusing that he encouraged them; and here again fortune was surely inimical to Mrs. Rashleigh. For after her appearance at church, the little village world began to call upon her. It was very awful; worse a great deal than she had expected.

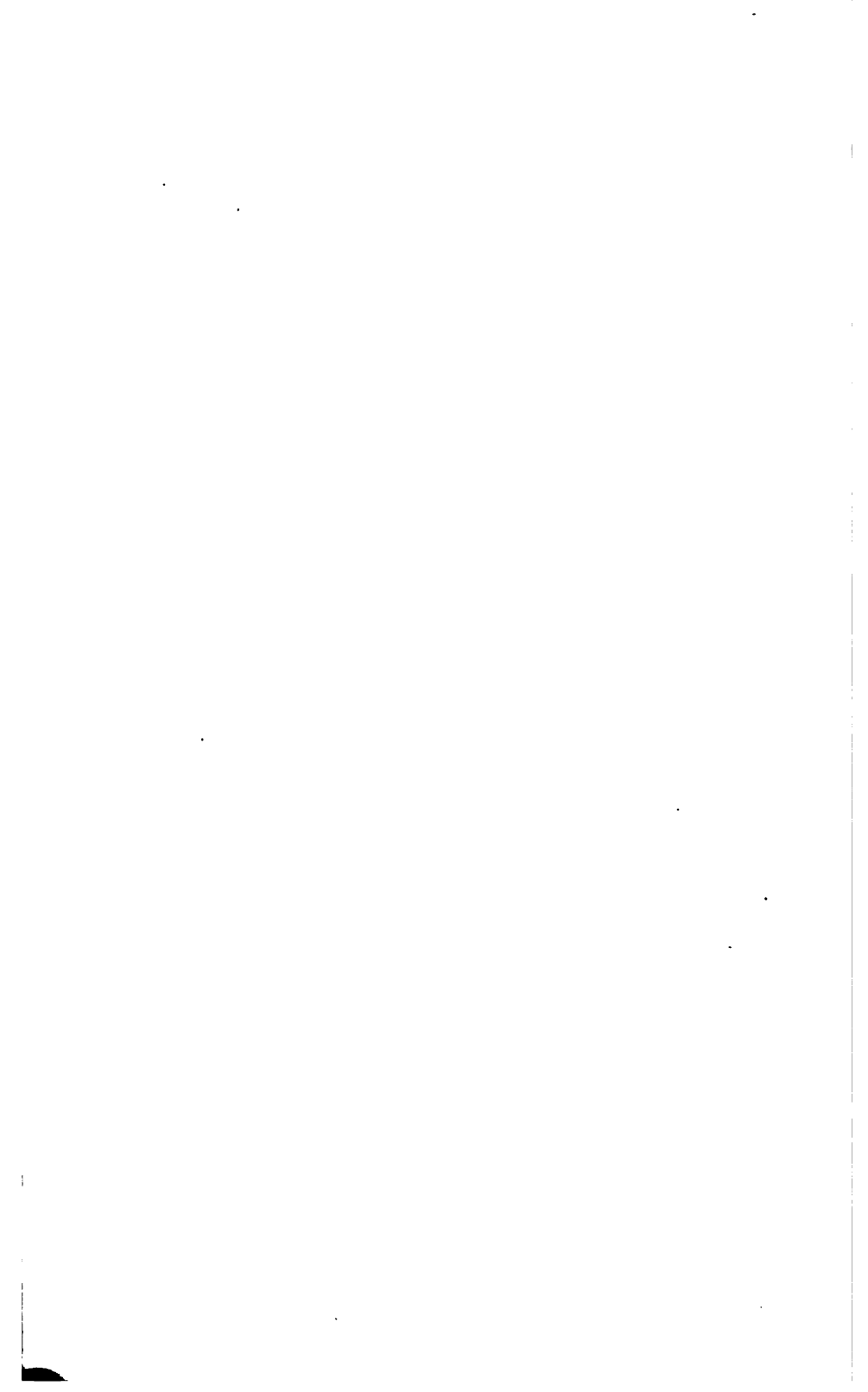
The visitors, already prejudiced, were so stiff and angular and utterly unapproachable, that Gertrude began to think society in the country must be a very starched affair indeed, and to reflect with dismay upon her former ideas of the cordial way in which she was to receive her neighbours' advances. There did not seem to be any advances to receive. Mrs. Rashleigh, young, inexperienced, and fearful of not pleasing, got nervous in the awful pauses, and rushed madly into a subject which she thought must surely be common ground. The necessity of improvement in the church music, and the dreary way in which the service was conducted.

Unhappy blindness that possessed her! Why could she not see the village crest erecting itself; growing red and defiant; rising higher and higher against her? So, that was the way in which the lady intended to commence her leadership! She was going to reform the church services, and the vicar of course; and perhaps she would tune the organ and 'lead' the singing. Really, the parish had not seen before how very faulty it was; there was hope for it, however, now that it possessed a Mrs. Noel Rashleigh! It would soon improve. A child like that to come and preach, indeed! As if it was not bad enough that she had angled for and caught the best match in the parish; and now she, an interloper, a conceited schoolgirl, must set up her opinion about the services, which were not good enough for her!

And she had actually laughed at the organist, and called him a 'country practitioner'!

Of course it was easy to make use of low wit. Anything could be turned into ridicule—except, of course, Mrs. Rashleigh. Also she had given it as her impression that many of the poorer





people seemed to go to church more for the actual change and variety than from any love for the service itself.

'Her impression!'

There is absolutely no word to express the intense contempt with which 'her impression' was flung at the unfortunate young lady, from all parts of the parish, till it became a household word, and small ladies and gentlemen used it in their nursery quarrels to extinguish a belligerent nurse.

Mrs. Rashleigh of course did not know what she had done; she only knew that she was wofully disappointed in these neighbours, from whose companionship she had hoped so much. Their bearing and conversation when she did happen to meet them gave her some vague uneasy idea of fencing, and roused more than once the angry colour to her face, and something like defiance to her eye. They were either very disagreeable people, or else something was wrong in herself. At any rate, their calls must be returned, and perhaps they would be different by-and-by.

But by this time Noel Rashleigh's holiday-making was over, and he had begun to busy himself again with his old occupations, and leave his wife to herself. She could not go alone to visit these people, even if it were proper she should do so. In the boldness of this propriety she had once taken her husband by storm, and inveigled him into accompanying her upon one of these visits of ceremony. If she could have heard the sigh with which he shut himself up in his study on his return, she might have known how hopeless it would be to try again. She did not know it, however; nevertheless it was not without a little misgiving that she ventured to knock at that door which some instinct warned her was intended to shut her husband from the outer world, and to be respected accordingly. Her knock produced no result, and she turned the handle and said gently, 'Noel.'

Not to this either did she get any answer. The door yielded to her hand, and she went in. She had a confused perception of some pungent odour in the room; of incomprehensible vessels and instruments lying about; of wonderful dusty volumes, on one of which she put her hand absently; and of her husband, absorbed and inaccessible, never even turning to look at her.

She would not go back. It was a mistake to be there, perhaps, but being there she told her errand bravely, see-

ing at the same time, with eyes that read the words mechanically, the title of the volume under her hand, 'Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum.'

A feeling of some grim significance in the words came over her. What business had her small requirements to obtrude themselves into an atmosphere such as this? What chance had she of winning Noel's ear?

When he did look up at her he was, as usual at such times, like a man half awake, and he was muttering, with his finger on a page to keep his place, something about the fairy of Paracelsus, and the hypothesis of Dr. Girtanner, of Gottingen.

Gertrude spoke again, hesitatingly this time, and with that strange new feeling of incongruity and hopelessness tinging her speech.

'What is it?' said Noel, dimly. 'Why, my dear girl, I never do go out; never did, you know. It is impossible.'

'But, Noel, these people have called upon us, and they will be offended.'

'What about?'

'If we do not return their calls.'

Mr. Rashleigh passed his hand through his hair confusedly, and his book, relieved of the finger, closed. He had lost his place, and was getting impatient.

'Can't you do it, Gertrude?'

'Alone!'

Noel was at his wits' end. He was very fond of his wife; but what were his neighbours to him? Had marriage brought upon him any necessity to study their convenience more than his own? Gertrude was the dearest little wife in the world, but that she should expect him to do such violence to his nature as this was very terrible.

'I'll tell you what, Gerty,' he said briskly. 'I'll get you a pony carriage, and then Joseph can drive you anywhere you want to go. That is, I'll reckon up and see if I can afford it.'

Gertrude put her hand on his shoulder timidly, and he took it in his own and kissed it; but the movement was not reassuring. It drove down deeper into her heart the conviction that he did not want her; it was a kiss of bribery, to send her away. This room and its contents were more to him than his wife; if she was to be an encumbrance why had he married her? With a womanly instinct of having at least one trial before confessing herself a secondary object to her husband, she turned steadily away from all these unknown rivals and saw only him. And in turning, the hand which had rested on that 'Thea-

trum Chemicum' struck it from her with an impetuous angry movement.

'Don't get a pony carriage, Noel. I don't want it; I should not like it. I want nothing—but you.'

'Well,' he said, smiling, 'you have got me, haven't you?'

Still Gertrude shut out everything in that room, against which a passionate sensation of jealousy was rising up, and saw only him. And she knew that she must yield.

'You will do without me this morning, Gertrude?'

'Yes, Noel.'

And then he drew her down and kissed her forehead.

'That's a good little wife. So now go and do these troublesome calls, and make haste back to tell me all about them.'

Gertrude went away heavily. And the walk was very hot, and the birds were very tiresome, for they would persist in singing almost as though it had still been summer, while in reality it was autumn; time for the trees to begin to wither, as her hopes were withering. She said so to herself, for there was a sort of relief in saying it.

'He told me to make haste back to tell him all about it. And by this time he has forgotten that he has a wife. It will be always the same, I suppose; always "sublimates." And I shall have to like this. If I could do anything for him I wouldn't care. I meant to try so hard to make him happy, and now he is happy without me. And then these dreadful people! Why should I trouble myself to conciliate them if Noel doesn't? I care only for him, and they are rude and disagreeable. I have a great mind to go back.'

But at this juncture, toying irresolutely with the gate that led to Mrs. Haye's residence, Gertrude caught sight of that lady in a strong-minded bonnet, huge gardening gloves, and carrying a garden fork. And Gertrude could not go back, for Mrs. Haye came forward to meet her, with a back so very straight and stiff that half a dozen pokers might have been fixed in it.

But Mrs. Rashleigh, out of sorts and dismal already, neither made nor received any more favourable impression than usual; and she was glad to get back, hot and tired, to her own room, and think about Noel.

Reaction had begun already, and she was blaming herself. She had been behaving like a spoiled child, not like a sensible wife. She must and would alter this. She would see about the housekeeping, and be useful somewhere.

So her next venture was an irruption into the kitchen, where a red-armed woman faced her defiantly, holding a spit in her hand, as though the little lady had been a joint of meat just ready for impaling. The red-armed woman had lived cook and housekeeper also with the master too long to be put upon by his new plaything of a wife. Let her keep to her pianner and her tattering and thingamies, and not bring airs into the kitchen, where everybody knew she was as ignorant as a babe unborn.

The cook did not say this aloud, of course; but as she stood like a bull making up his mind for a rush, shaking his head and snorting, Gertrude read it as plainly as though it had been spoken. And her heart sank, for she was ignorant. She was also totally incapable of dealing with this woman; and the thought crossed her mind that Noel, being aware of this incapacity, might have helped her. She dismissed the thought as disloyal. She must never blame Noel any more. Everything was her own fault. She should have taken Aunt Jean's advice, and put herself into training. Her idea of being useful in housekeeping details was, then, a failure; her own servants treated her with a deference that was galling from its assumption of superior wisdom, and she was nobody in her own house.

She had also made a feeble attempt in the direction of the schools, but the mistress thereof had shown herself so decidedly cantankerous that Gertrude did not dare to persevere. It was true that she might have applied to the vicar, but then she was shy; moreover, he might not see her anxiety for work in the right light. He was a very good man, but he was also very old and infirm, and if he had possessed enemies, which he did not—at least in his own parish—they might have accused him of a sort of sleepy, apathetic dullness in the monotonous round of duties which he went through now just as he had gone through them forty years ago. As for her brother, it was quite useless to appeal to him. He was still new in the parish, and was not liked. Although not gifted with a brilliant intellect, such talents as he had were devoted to his calling, and his fault in the beginning had been over plain speaking wherever he saw abuses. The curate whom he succeeded had been a hunter, shooter, fisher, cricketer, athlete; not, perhaps, one of Mr. Kingsley's muscular priests, since these are not supposed to neglect their duties, as he did. Nevertheless, inasmuch as he gave to the poor with

a free-handed generosity, which Mr. Chester, being poor himself, could not emulate, comparisons were drawn between the two considerably to the advantage of the former curate, and to the depreciation of the present one.

But all this has nothing to do with Mrs. Rashleigh's troubles; neither did her retrospect on this dreary November day, in which the sun positively declined to come out, help her, except to this conclusion. She had wronged Noel in her marriage with him. He had expected a wife able to discharge all the duties of a head of the house, and she was nothing but a child after all, who dared not speak to her own servants.

At night she sat down to the piano. And by-and-by the door of that distant study opened, and Noel came in and sat down just where she had been sitting over her work.

Gertrude played on—music that seemed to grow spontaneously under her fingers out of the hope that at least now she was doing something to please him.

And she played till her fingers ached, and the church clock struck, causing her to wonder at the lateness of the hour. Then she rose and went up to her husband. Noel was asleep.

CHAPTER V.

ANY MUSHROOMS?

The December sun shone out feebly, only, as it seemed, to show the frosty nakedness of the land.

But a bright idea had struck Mrs. Rashleigh, and she was walking briskly through the fields with a basket in her hand. She was looking for mushrooms. Of course she had not told anyone what the basket was for—indeed, who was there to tell?—or she might have been laughed at for her pains. She never stopped to consider times and seasons. It had suddenly occurred to her that mushrooms grew in the fields; so into the fields she went to look for them.

And she had walked a long way, and was tired when she stopped appalled before a gate which was padlocked.

What could she do now? She had taken this way, thinking it would be shorter, and to go all round those fields back again would be terrible. While she deliberated a voice startled her, and turning round she saw Mr. Frankton in the act of raising his hat to her.

'I am sorry it is locked, Mrs. Rashleigh. But it is a gate we very seldom

use, and the village boys had a bad habit of leaving it open. I will go home for the key if you don't mind waiting; or—'

Mr. Frankton looked at the slight figure of the lady speculatively. It is possible that he was thinking how easy a solution of the difficulty it would be to lift her, basket and all, over the gate, but of course he did not dare to suggest it. As for Gertrude, the possibility of climbing a gate was not likely to occur to her.

'Not on any account, thank you,' she said, to his offer of fetching the key. 'I can go round. I thought this way was nearer. I have been looking for mushrooms,' she added, glancing at her basket; 'but I have not found any.'

Mr. Frankton did not smile.

It was a very winning face that was turned towards him; nervously sensitive—somewhat childish. He began to think vaguely of all the stories of Mrs. Rashleigh's designing nature, her pride, arrogance, and conceit. He had paid but little attention to them himself, but they occurred to him now, incidentally with this childish acknowledgment of looking for mushrooms on a frosty day in December.

'Perhaps they don't grow on your land, Mr. Frankton?'

'Not at this time of the year,' replied Mr. Frankton, with perfect gravity and courtesy. 'It is not the season for them. I can show you a shorter way home than the one you came by, Mrs. Rashleigh. Will you allow me to carry your basket?'

And then she found herself walking towards home side by side with Mr. Frankton, and confessing to herself that he was far more agreeable and polite than the ladies of the parish had been, with the exception, perhaps, of his wife, who could not be uncourteous, though her distance was freezing.

'This is your way,' said Mr. Frankton, relinquishing the basket. 'Through the gate by that large holly-bush. It is scarcely more than a field's breadth from there.'

It was not to be expected that Mr. Frankton could resist telling the episode of the mushrooms; but when he found that it was snapped up and twisted into affectation of pretty ignorance, superciliousness, conceit, he stopped, and said, laughing, 'When Mrs. Frankton first came home she called the guinea fowls jackdaws. Don't be hard upon Rashleigh's pretty little wife.'

The walk, however, which Gertrude had to take in consequence of her ex-

pedition was of far more importance than Mr. Frankton had imagined it would be when he pointed out to her that shorter route.

The gate by the holly-bush ! When she reached that bush she stopped in impulsive admiration for the brilliant berries with which it was covered ; and as she stopped the thought which it suggested was so enormous, so beautiful, so full of capabilities and possible delight, that she forgot all about her fatigue, and started off with a fresh impetus towards home that she might think it out.

This casual suggestion had fired a long train of ideas—lighted up a hundred designs and devices, all bearing upon it or growing out of it, but before lying torpid amongst the records of things seen once but now forgotten.

Here was work for idle hands ; beautiful work, too good for her. Too good almost in the first flush of anticipation to be possible. What if some one else, finding out the notion, should take it from her ! As yet the very idea of it was hidden in her own mind, and so it should be kept. No one must hear of it. By a subtle process of analogy, she thought she comprehended now a speech her husband had once made to the curate in her hearing about the necessity which impels men, having conceived the hope or prospect of a new invention, to keep it to themselves.

And then she knew so well how to do this work, the idea of which had occurred to her. Symbolical devices sprang up ready made before her eyes to dazzle them ; beautiful wreaths and chaplets. Was there time for her, single-handed, to do all that she would wish to do ? She counted up. It wanted nearly three weeks to Christmas. In that time surely she might do all ; but she must have a room set apart to work in, and Joseph must be pressed into the service to get evergreens ; and that dreadful housemaid must, if possible, be won over to keep the secret.

Before all, however, she must have the vicar's permission, and this was to be quietly obtained, so that not even Noel should know what was going on. It should be a surprise to him and to every one, even the vicar himself, who was not to know beforehand the extent of the proposed decorations.

That evening her head was too busy to listen for the opening door ; too busy to care that Noel remained in his seclusion later than usual ; too busy to be miserable. She had found work enough.

CHAPTER VI.

QUID NUNC ?

What was it ? Who said it ? Could it possibly be true ?

There was a ghastly whisper afloat that Mrs. Rashleigh had told the old clerk she would take out of his hands the Christmas decorations, which had hitherto consisted of a bush of holly and ivy with the berries flowered in the corner of each pew, and a besom in the east window.

And the parish held its breath, and there was a great calm, like the calm before a thunderstorm.

And the curate found his sister one day out on the lawn in a white frock, and caught her putting her hands behind her when she saw him, like a naughty child, looking, at the same time, so wickedly happy and silently busy that even to his slow apprehension the idea of danger presented itself.

'Now, Gerty,' said George, 'don't you do too much, just at first.'

'Too much !' repeated Mrs. Rashleigh, indignantly. 'George, how is that possible ?'

Mr. Chester hesitated. He had an indistinct consciousness that his sister was not in favour ; and he thought that perhaps he really was disposed to let that consideration bias him, and to be over cautious. He fancied uneasily that it would have been better not to keep the thing so secret, for all that, but he scarcely liked to say so.

'Well,' he said, 'I only know if I hadn't gone about things too hotly at first I might have done more. People have prejudices, you know, and even if things are right and fit in themselves—'

'Right should give way to prejudice. I wonder at you, George.'

George would perhaps have argued further, but his sister took his arm and led him into her workroom, where the housemaid, won over, was busy over some tiny wreaths.

'Look there,' said Gertrude. 'You ought to be flattered, for even Noel doesn't so much as know what I am about. This scroll is for over the altar, and the font is to be managed with real flowers and moss. How gloomy you look, George. Indeed I don't think you deserve to see these things.'

'People never like to be taken by storm,' responded George.

It was true that he looked gloomy. He did not know what to say. That Gertrude had the vicar's permission was a very strong point ; but George was far from understanding how very little the

vicar knew what his permission meant; the latter having thought, in his simplicity, that the rather odd little lady, Mrs. Rashleigh, had a fancy for taking the clerk's work from him, and sticking the holly branches into the gimlet holes prepared for them.

'Nevertheless,' muttered the curate as he went away, 'I'm afraid, I am very much afraid there'll be a row.'

But the dreadful thundery calm continued, and on Christmas Eve the old vicar, seeing ladders in the churchyard, and having a dim vision of workmen in the porch, and a dainty figure passing in and out amongst them, wondered what was the matter, and thought he would go and see by-and-by.

As it happened, however, he had his sermon to finish, and by-and-by did not come until Christmas morning was beginning to dawn, and, as was his custom, he went across the churchyard to the vestry door, and thence into the church.

At the door the vicar halted in amazement. A long while he stood there, with his hand on the back of a pew, and then there stole a strange expression over his face, and he moved on, but very slowly and silently, towards the altar.

From under the dreamy torpor of many years something came struggling up into the old man's heart which touched him strangely; his drooping shoulders seemed to lose their droop, and his lips were moving softly. He was reading the golden 'Gloria in Excelsis Deo, et in terra Pax!'

And suddenly there was a mist before his eyes, and a star shone down over the distant birthplace earth once offered to her Lord, and the Light of the world was come.

And the church was, as it were, full of the waving of angels' wings, and of the music of the song which fell upon the shepherds' ears. And still the old man stood there motionless. There was something so inexpressibly solemn and tender in the thoughts this unexpected sight had roused within him; something so strangely beautiful and touching about these silent witnesses that bade earth's children bear in mind the light and life which broke upon their darkness as to-day, that when the vicar left the church his lips were muttering, half unconsciously, 'Put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.'

He went back into his study and took up the sermon prepared for the morning's service; dry with arguments from

dusty volumes; sleepy with the wisdom of many commentators; a soulless disquisition which seemed to crumble before the spirit that overshadowed the silent church in the fresh dawn of that Christmas morning.

Three hours were before him yet; and as he wrote, the solemn exaltation and tenderness were like a halo round his pen, and words flowed from it swiftly, as though they had come from something within himself which even he could scarcely comprehend.

A brief sermon, lasting in its delivery but a few minutes; but so new, so different from the dreary dissertations which usually came from the vicar, that Gertrude Rashleigh, listening from her corner, forgot for a moment the sudden blow that had fallen upon her, in the wonderful power of this eloquence coming straight from one man's heart to go straight to the hearts of others.

How good of him; how very good, and strange too, it was to preach as though he had known all about the decorations beforehand!

For Gertrude was suffering from a disappointment whose keenness she scarcely realized yet.

Early in her place that morning, the uneasy movement that ran round the church as the congregation came in fell upon her heart as though a sheet of ice were being slowly drawn across it. She had gone full of the hopeful excitement of this surprise which was to please everybody.

Noel himself had looked round from the decorations to his wife with an uneasy suspicion, and with that look came her first misgiving.

Then followed those movements in the congregation; those glances of sullen disapproval and open indignation which she could not mistake. Poor Gertrude shrank back further than usual into her corner; but the worst was to come. Mrs. Haye had not yet arrived.

Never, so long as she lives, will Gertrude Rashleigh forget the first tap of those high-heeled boots in the aisle, nor the painful beating of her own heart as they came nearer. Now that the thing was unalterable, she began to perceive faintly something of her own rashness and imprudence. What a time those boots were coming up with the strong-minded, determined tap, tap on the pavement! Never will she forget the rigid defiance expressed in the poker-stiffened back, the raised nose, the supercilious altogether that went on beyond her seat in the direction of its

own; that paused all at once; that took a calmly deliberate survey of the church; that turned round on those awful heels, and composedly walked out again.

CHAPTER VII.

THE VICAR'S SPEECH.

'I will do anything you wish, Noel. Indeed, I am only too glad to think there is anything I can do.'

The speech sent an additional sting after the many which had been worrying Mr. Noel Rashleigh's conscience ever since that unhappy Christmas Day, but he replied composedly—

'Then be a brave little woman, and prepare to show yourself a wonderful hostess. You see we must give this party, and, as the vicar says, it should be before Lent. We ought to have done it before.'

'But, Noel, there will be so many. I hardly think our dining-table will accommodate them all.'

'Then we must have a leaf put in. But I believe it will do.'

'And, indeed, I don't think it likely they will come.'

Noel smiled. 'They will come. The vicar has made it known that he is to be here, and everybody likes to meet him. Besides—don't look so disconsolate, little woman—they will be curious to know what whim has struck the Rashleighs now.'

Gertrude did look disconsolate; there was no denying the fact. Again she heard the tapping of the high-heeled boots, and saw those hard, pale eyes meeting her own in their survey of her work; and she shuddered. No one had ever told her why Mrs. Haye went out of church that morning. Gertrude herself suggested illness; but she knew, and George Chester knew, that among the many thoughts and ideas contained in Mrs. Haye's strong-minded bonnet, illness did not figure. The storm had broken out, and the curate knew that the parish was like a beehive when a wasp has got into it. But what was to be done? George suggested that the decorations should be quietly taken down; and his sister, stung into callousness, said it was no matter whether they came down or not; wished she had never seen them; wished she had never gone after those horrible mushrooms, or met Mr. Frankton, who directed her to the holly-bush. For, to her utter dismay and wretchedness, Gertrude conceived the idea that Noel was hopelessly angry

with her. There was a change in his manner which she did not understand. He seemed to be so gravely solicitous and tender over her, at a distance, as though she were under a ban, and he pitied her. That he who did so shrink from observation of any kind, who was so singularly reticent and nervous, should be brought into such public bad odour, and through her means! This was the way she performed her wifely duties! This was being a good wife to him!

'It is all so very small and trivial,' said George, 'that I really think there must be something else, Gertrude, something besides these decorations. The only objection I have heard came from Mrs. Haye, and it is that the flowers distract her attention from her prayers.'

'Distract!' broke out Gertrude. 'If any one is distracted I should be. Tell her to take those red grapes out of her bonnet then. Why does she bring those to church to distract people? Who ever heard of red grapes?'

But upon the proposal to remove the decorations the vicar quietly put his veto. No! they should remain up until the proper time for removing them. Let Mrs. Rashleigh be patient; he thought he saw a way out of the difficulty. And so after the decorations had been down almost long enough to be forgotten, and the ferment had subsided a little, the vicar opened his project to Noel Rashleigh, whose co-operation he desired and obtained.

'I would willingly do this myself,' concluded the vicar; 'but it will come better from you, and be more likely to effect the desired end. You despise these trivialities, and dislike them; I cannot think it admirable that you should do so. Depend upon it, nothing tends so much to foster real kind feeling and goodwill as the interchange of these small civilities and courtesies of ordinary life.'

And the project was successful. That is to say, Mr. Rashleigh was right as to the acceptance of the invitations. Many reasons combined to render it improbable that any of those invited guests would be defaulters; neither were they. The Lisles and the Franktons, the Smiths, the Richardsons, and the Joneses, the village doctor and his little sister, and last, but not least, Mrs. Boddington Haye. When that strange assembly sat down to his table, Noel, acting host by his own will and deed, knew that if the thoughts of all could be collected and brought to light, the wonderful medley would be strongly

tinctured with enmity towards himself and his wife.

'My fault,' thought Noel.

And as he glanced towards Gertrude, and saw the painful efforts she was making to keep down the nervous tremors that would rise up to threaten her, down went that sting again straight into his heart to worry him.

There was about the whole scene an odd element of anticipation, of which every one in his or her secret heart was conscious, without understanding it; and to no one present was it more perceptible than to Gertrude, whose seat was anything but a seat of roses, in spite of the reassuring presence of the kindly vicar at her right hand.

All at once—Gertrude could never tell how it came about—the guests, the table, the room itself, had become one giddy mass before her, and the vicar was making a speech. A portion of that speech will be sufficient to quote.

It was not the first time, he said, that it had been his pleasant duty to express something of a feeling, the source of which must naturally be to him one of perpetual and grateful satisfaction. He meant, his deep sense of the unvarying kindness and goodwill which, from the first day of his coming amongst them until now, he had experienced from the whole body of his parishioners. His friends whom he saw around him would readily understand that this kind feeling and sympathy had smoothed many a difficulty in his path, and added its charm to many a duty which would have been but bare duty without it.

He wished them all to know his grateful appreciation of their kindness, and his satisfaction in the consciousness that his ministrations had been happily unfettered by those sad parish discords which are so disheartening a stumbling-block in the way of many a hard-worked clergyman. He did not attempt to conceal that these heartfelt acknowledgments were but the prelude to a further favour which he was about to ask from his friends. (Sensation.)

It would be out of place here, he thought, to eulogize or expatiate upon the revival of a more tasteful, thoughtful, and reverent style of church decoration for the festivals. His poor old clerk was, like himself, almost worn out and wholly helpless in such matters. The gimlet hole and the bush would be the utmost effect producible by their joint genius.

He had already thanked their hostess, Mrs. Noel Rashleigh, for her exertions this Christmas; he could not, of course, ask her to repeat those exertions at the

coming Easter-tide; but he hoped that these, his older and more tried friends, would not think him over-confident if he confessed that he had been depending upon them for help in this extremity. He was aware that the work was in reality hard work, but yet he was bold, as they saw, in asking favours—possibly because he had never yet met with disappointment from them. If these, his friends, would take the responsibility of the Easter decorations from his shoulders to their own he would take it as a great favour. He himself could not promise to help, for he had no taste; but he could look on and admire.

A few words as to their host and hostess. He felt a sure hope that he was simply expressing a general sentiment in offering to both the sincere and hearty congratulations of all present upon their marriage, a cordial welcome to Mrs. Noel Rashleigh, though they had made her, like a junior boy at his school, a fag on her first arrival; an earnest wish that, as a stranger coming amongst them, she would not find them wanting in that genial sympathy and kindly feeling which should draw all Christians, and especially fellow-parishioners, closely together. He begged to propose the health of Mrs. Noel Rashleigh, his new parishioner.

In the confusion of all that followed Gertrude had a dim, amazed consciousness of the enthusiasm with which this speech was received; of the reactionary advances towards herself; of being made in this reaction a sort of heroine; of wanting to cry, and being terrified lest she should be unable to control herself; of a strange desire to do something great for the vicar; to go to Noel, and ask him if he was angry now; but Noel was so busy amongst the guests, so unlike himself, so talkative, that she could not help following him with her eyes, though it was impossible to get near him.

'I knew if anybody could make peace it would be the vicar,' whispered George. 'I never heard a better, more tactful speech in my life. I shall reap the benefit of it as well as you.'

Gertrude scarcely heard him. She could not realize the extent of the reaction which the vicar's speech had produced. Of course the hearers agreed with him. It was their place to take up a stranger just coming into the parish, and welcome her and—patronize her. They had not exactly done this; in fact, they had been rather hard upon her. But it was not too late yet; they could

make up for it. And really she was very pleasant, and so was Mr. Rashleigh; they could not help acknowledging that a little prejudice had been at work.

And the remainder of that day was like a perplexed dream to Gertrude. Her chief thought was Noel, and she could not even speak to him; she even fancied that he purposely avoided her. If the people would only go!

She was conscious that all the conversation turned upon the new subject of church decorations; that enthusiasm about it had sprung up so suddenly as to be quite incomprehensible to her; that she was questioned; her books on decoration were brought out and borrowed; the pattern of her alphabet asked for. And everybody was so cordial that she wondered how she could ever have called them stiff. More wonderful than all, she gathered that in the projected Easter decorations Mrs. Rodington Haye was taking a prominent part; and a murmur in that lady's voice reached Gertrude that 'she thought wreaths very pretty indeed, and crosses admissible; but when it came to flowers she was not so sure——'

Even this was said in a mollified, yielding tone, which Gertrude had never heard from the poker woman before.

And then they were all gone, and she was alone with her husband in the deserted drawing-room, standing before him more timidly perhaps than ever she had done in her life before.

And suddenly he had put out his arm and drawn her to him, and he was kissing her forehead like he used to do before all this misery occurred.

'Oh, Noel, Noel, I thought you were angry with me! This dreadful party—that you dislike so much—I brought it all upon you.'

'Not angry with you,' replied Noel,

'but with myself. My poor little girl, I have been a bad, unkind husband to you.'

'No, no.'

'Yes. Well, you can creep as close as you like, and you can put your hand on my mouth if you like. I shall only kiss it, and it won't stop me. Gertrude, shall we let bygones be bygones? I have thought a great deal since Christmas; and I see that I have been cruel and careless. Look here. That ugly door, which I dare say you hate—I hope you do; you must if you love me—eh?'

'Don't be vexed, Noel; I do hate it.'

'That is satisfactory. Well then, that door is your natural enemy and mine. You shall keep the key, and let me have it for two hours daily. And you won't keep secrets from me again?'

'Never.'

'We will begin afresh. The other day I was wishing I could turn back in reality; but you see bought experience is worth all the admonition in the world; and I understand a speech of your aunt's now that I thought great nonsense when she made it.'

'Ah, Aunt Jean. Now I may ask her to stay with us?'

'As many Aunt Jeans as you like, provided they don't interfere too much between you and me. It is a wonderful thing, but I feel like a man who has been asleep; and I'm sadly afraid the elements of jealousy are in me, and only want developing.'

'I like you to be jealous—about me.'

'And, Gertrude——'

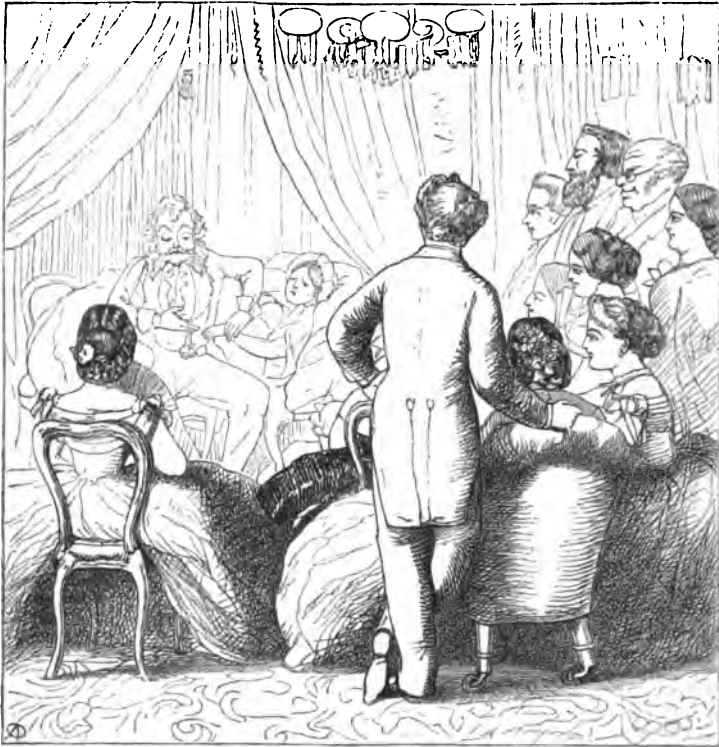
'Yes, Noel.'

'We will have the pony-carriage. The only difference shall be that I will be driver instead of Joseph. Will that please you?'

'After all,' said Gertrude, 'what a good thing it was that I didn't know the right time of year for mushrooms!'



CHARADES AND DUMB CRAMBO.



THIS was how it was. You know we never intended to give a grand party, or anything of the sort; but we just asked in old Major Chutney and sister, with one or two others, to dinner; and then we met some young men out walking; and Fanny and Emmy were staying in the house with us; and so we thought the boys might as well drop in and have a quiet evening; and old stupid Miss Scratchley came in with her yellow wig. And as she is little Harry's godmother, why of course we couldn't stop her—could we now?

Well, she came first, and had her dinner, but couldn't make out 'why on earth the cook put pepper in the soup.' She found fault with everything; but you know that's always the way with her. And I don't be-

lieve she'll leave Harry so much as her old snuff-box; and that's not worth much. At any rate, she succeeded in putting the old major in a very much worse temper than he usually is; and he snubbed his poor old sister till I really thought we were going to have nothing but quarrels all the evening. I must get on to how it was we had charades. We were all sitting in the drawing-room, and the uncomfortable state of affairs caused by sweet Miss Scratchley had not evaporated, when in came Tom Lennox. 'Just the man!' we said; and taking him aside, I inquired of him, 'What can we do, Tom? it's as flat as can be. I don't know what we shall do, I am sure.'

'Well,' said he, 'let's have charades.'

'Charades!' I exclaimed; 'but there's no one to act, and no scenes, and no nothing.'

'Wait a bit, my dear fellow,' says Tom; 'we'll fix it. Get a heap of cloaks and hats and umbrellas, with any amount of towels and handkerchiefs for head-dresses, and, as for "no one to act," why, we'll all act—old Scratchley and all.'

Now if there was any point on which Miss Scratchley was particular, as she said, it was play-acting.

However, we got all Tom wanted, and put the things in the library, with a looking-glass and every accessory we could think of; and, as the young men had come by this time, we got a big sheet and pinned it across the large folding-doors so as to make a good stage of one room.

'Holloa!' screeched out Scratchley, 'what are you doing, Henry?'

'Oh, nothing, aunt!' I said; 'nothing particular; only a charade or two. Who'll act?' And before the old wretch could answer, up jumps saucy Miss Emmy. 'Charades! Oh, how jolly!' And Fanny and some of the youngsters joining in, got ahead of the old lady's 'Well, I never!' at which point she stopped, and I could see made a mental memorandum on the spot to cut us off with a shilling—or less.

Any how, we selected our party, and Miss Emmy, who is the old major's especial pet, insisted on his coming, and, as he said, 'making an old fool of himself,' in which part he shone conspicuously. A Miss Jones, also, was added to the force by persuasion. At first everything went wrong: the lookers-on, who stayed in the drawing-room, wouldn't talk, except my aunt, who recovered her tongue wonderfully soon, and informed my wife that she would never enter our house again. Such wickedness and profligacy as 'play-acting' and 'showing one's legs' she never put up with. In vain my poor old girl expostulated, and informed her we were not going to have a ballet; it was no use; so she was left to mutter. At this period my wife asked me what we could do with her; so I sent in some negus and a claret-cup—and an

especially strong glass for her, of the strength of which she knew nothing. We had a grand discussion in the 'green room' as to what we should do; and we settled, with the aid of some strong ale and the aforesaid Badminton, 'to play first at dumb crambo.' Perhaps you do not know what dumb crambo is, so I will tell you.

The game of dumb crambo is played in this manner. The actors retire, and the company settle on a word, that has to be guessed by the former, who are merely informed of the sound of the final syllable. They again retire, and think over it. When agreed as to what they consider is the word, they come on the stage and act in dumb that which they have fixed on. For instance, they are told the word ends in 'igh,' and as the spelling is unknown, they act shy, after this fashion:—Two young ladies take their work, and the curtain is drawn up, discovering them pretending to talk in an animated way. The door opens, and in comes rather boisterously a gentleman pulling in a reluctant youth, who, in his confusion, drops his hat and umbrella, and at length is forced into a chair. The ladies having risen, and bowed with great *impressment*, he sits on the very edge of his chair, and the ladies manage to get theirs on each side of the unfortunate, each commencing to make violent love to him. The distress of the youth is too apparent; and when one of the girls at last forces a skein of worried on to his unwilling hands, he tries to retire, loses his balance, and comes with a crash to the ground, forming the climax. Should the company see the right word has been acted, they say so, and applaud: if not, the actors are hissed out, and have to try again.

We determined to try dumb crambo, and all the party had a great argument as to the word. Old Scratchley insisted on the word ending with 'teapot,' but being informed that was not one syllable, she relapsed into the sulks. At length they settled, and announced the termination to be 'ill,' of which we were informed, and we deter-

mined to act the syllable itself for the whole word, for if it was not 'ill' it might be 'pill,' and that would do nicely; so we had the sheet arranged, and got up our scene as follows:—The arrangements being completed, our curtain is raised, and, behold, Miss Jones lying on a bed of sickness, *i. e.*, three chairs and a pillow, the only light being that of a night-lamp; Emmy very neatly got up with a housemaid's apron and cap, and looking so sweet and bewitching that it would be a pleasure to be ill if attended by her. Fanny, very wise and motherly, in nightcap and dressing-gown, approaches the bed, pours some physic (port wine, as it happened) into a dessert-spoon, and, with Emmy's help, forces Miss Jones to rise and swallow the horrible potion. I would not believe a pretty girl like Miss J. could make such a face as she did on that occasion; and with which, and a feeble moan, she subsided on to her pillow, leaving her hand hanging down over the side of the bed (chairs I mean). She has a small white hand, and knows it too. Fanny looks at her compassionately, Emmy wipes her eyes with the corner of her apron, and cries piteously. All at once a knock is heard at the door, and in stalks Paterfamilias (your humble servant), leading in, like a tame bear, an experienced doctor (Major Chutney), who, as an appropriate introduction into a lady's bedroom, brings his umbrella and hat—a large paper frill from his bosom representing the stage doctor of the period. The learned man seats himself by the bed and feels the patient's pulse, putting out a yard of tongue from his mouth, as an intimation of his wish, eliciting from Miss J. a little red tip from her mouth, which appearing very unsatisfactory, the doctor waves his hand, and in rushes a maid with two bandboxes, one labelled 'PILLS,' and the other 'OINTMENT.' Out of the first he produces a large ball of worsted, and tries to induce Miss Jones to swallow the same, terminating the scene by the young lady recovering health and strength, and the whole party rushing from the room, fol-

lowed by the hisses and laughter of the audience, from which we rightly inferred we had made a bad hit. The real word was too silly to notice. We guessed 'Still,' and all went in and sat on chairs without moving for two or three minutes, and, being applauded, were of course right. The next thing we did was, rather, fun. Tom Lennox, who cannot bear to do anything without talking, wanted a charade which he had been concocting on the spot. Now the very thing needful in affairs of this sort is to have a good manager, who can 'get up' the scenery and persons well, and Tom was just the sort of man, being asked to every party within his hail on this account. Well, he said, as if he had thought nothing about it, 'Oh, let's act Barbarism!' and so we did. We got the characters for the first half thus. Major Chutney begged off this time, and I left him in a corner with a bottle of ale. He was just getting talkative, and beginning some tale about an ayah and a chupattie, and an adjutant who had got hold of the chupattie—what that is I don't know, and as he did not mention the officer's regiment I can't find out; I know, of course, what an ayah is. Anyhow, as I said, we left him alone.

Tom Lennox we dressed up as a barber by taking his coat off, curling his whiskers, and tying on him one of the footman's aprons: this, with a comb behind his ear, completed his disguise. One of the youngsters, an Ensign Brown from the camp, we made into a barber's boy by merely taking his coat off and giving him a towel to clean the shop up with. Miss Jones was to act Lady Weeds, with Emmy her daughter Lady Cecilia. Miss Fanny was to act lady's-maid to Emmy. The looking-glass was placed on a table, and on another all the brushes, combs, bottles, bandolines, and everything of the sort that our establishment could boast of.

Curtain rises—*i. e.*, I hook it away with a walking-stick.

SCENE I.—A Barber's Shop.

Enter hastily BARBER. John, John, John, John, I say, you lazy rascal!

JOHN enters lazily, yawning. Did you call, sir?

BARBER. Call! yes, you idle, lazy rascal, I did call. Here, it is eleven o'clock, and Lady Cecilia coming to have her back hair cut, and nothing done. There's all the hair I cut off that bald gentleman, and the wig for him with the long hair—I mean the bald wig for the long-haired—but you know what I mean, laughing at me. Here, lend it me. (*Snatches JOHN's towel, and gives him a push, and rubs vehemently at the glass, knocks down a box of small articles, and in the confusion enter LADY WEEDS and LADY CECILIA.*) Oh, your la'ship! Honoured, your la'ship. Walk this way, your la'ship.

LADY CEO. Ma, is this the shop? (*Last word to be drawled out fine lady-ish.*) I don't think I la-like it. Well, let's see. Where's the ma-a-an?

BARBER. Here, your la'ship. Please to be seated, your la'ship. Very warm, your la'ship.

LADY CEO. Disgusting creature! Annette (*to FANNY, who has begun a flirtation with JOHN*), my fa'a'n.

ANNETTE. Fan? Yes, my lady. (*Hands her a smelling-bottle. JOHN seizes fan and gives it.*)

BARBER. (*Takes out comb and hair-pins, and lets Miss Emmy's hair down, winking to me outside the door.*) How would your la'ship like your la'ship's hair cut, short, or long, or thinned?

LADY CEO. Cut a very little. And, ma'a'an, I should like to see some flowers.

BARBER. John, bring them harti-ficial flowers. Here, your la'ship; suit your la'ship's complexion; blush-rose, your la'ship; fine colour, your la'ship.

(*Here her ladyship spies JOHN and ANNETTE kissing, or pretending to, and speaks.*)

LADY CEO. Annette, you're flirting. Come here. (*Drops her fan on purpose.*) Annette, my fan. (*ANNETTE picks it up.*) Annette, show the horrid man what I want. (*ANNETTE does so, and is detected kissing her hand to JOHN. Up jumps LADY CECILIA.*) Annette, you are flirting; I shall stay here no longer (*at which remark, being a preconcerted signal, the whole party exit in haste.*)

Much amusement follows, and the company consult among themselves. Half think that the word is Flirt, and half the right thing—Barber. No time is lost, however, for the second syllable, 'ism,' which is performed as follows:—My wife and I act the part of Master and Mistress of a house, and wait for servants to come and engage themselves.

Enter MISS EMMY, as a candidate for a cook's situation.

MY WIFE. So you're a cook, are you?

EMMY. Is'm. (*This is supposed to be short for 'Yes, ma'am.'*)

MY WIFE. Oh! you are a good cook?

EMMY. Is'm; very good, mum.

MY WIFE. You expect good wages?

EMMY. Is'm; forty pounds a year.

MY WIFE (*in astonishment*). What! forty pounds a year!

EMMY. Is'm; and perquisites.

MY WIFE. Oh, I never allow perquisites!

EMMY. Oh yes you do, mum.

MY WIFE. Very good; that will do; you can go.

(*When she is gone my wife talks to me, and declares I was looking at the girl's pretty face, which of course I deny, and in walks MISS FANNY, with bonnet and shawl.*)

MY WIFE. Well, what place have you come for? a cook's, I suppose?

MISS FANNY. Is'm; a cook's, please 'm.

MY WIFE. Can you boil potatoes well?

MISS FANNY. Is'm.

MY WIFE. Are you tidy?

MISS FANNY. Is'm.

MY WIFE. Have you some nice chintz dresses?

MISS FANNY. Is'm.

MY WIFE. I don't allow followers.

MISS FANNY. Oh, no, mum! But my cousins may come to see me, mayn't they?

MY WIFE. What are they—soldiers?

MISS FANNY. Is'm, please 'um. One in the 'Orse Artillery, one in the Foot Artillery, one in the Guards, one in the Marines, and a Coldstream, please 'um: that's all, mum.

(*Here my wife, seeing my amusement, gets up, pretending I am making eyes at the girl, and tells her to quit*

the room. 'Is'm! is'm! is'm!' says FANNY, and flounces out in the most approved method.)—End of Scene II.

This syllable is discussed, and guessed at length, and the actors come forward to ask if the whole word has been found out. When it has been settled the ladies join the lookers-on, and we gentlemen prepare for the grand affair of the evening. Old Major Chutney, who had been at the Cape, as well as all over India and Thibet, insisted on our acting the word Chief. He was so obstinate that we gave in, and prepared for our parts. We all dressed up as Caffres, by blacking our faces with burnt cork, draping our manly forms in blankets and counterpanes, and decorating ourselves with impromptu ornaments. The major was most imposing; he got a doll's wicker cradle belonging to our little girl, and fixed this on his head, and with a shield (the cover of a saucepan) and a genuine spear he looked very grand indeed. Tom Lennox made him shut his eyes to be corked, and then painted his nose a fine red with some chalk. We then got a trunk, with a number of articles of apparel, and placed it in charge of one of the party, who remained in the character of an European with a white hat and umbrella. Never shall I forget the savage and ferocious howl with which the Caffre chieftain rushed upon his foe. With an impetus there was no resisting, he fell upon him, bonneted him with the saucepan-lid, and in two seconds the hapless Englishman lay dying on the sward—I should say, the hearth-rug. It was then we displayed our knowledge of Caffre language, for when the old boy said, 'Ayah, pane, ankosi benki ti coonda báh!' in we all rushed, shouting, 'Eestoo an, áglaol' and put an end to the agonies of the wounded victim, who lay writhing on the ground. The next was to take an inventory of the effects of the deceased traveller. The major—I beg his pardon, the gallant chief—waved his hand, and shouting, 'Baith, jow, urás, kuls!' we of course sat in a ring, and held counsel. The savages could not understand the various articles of apparel: on each garment a violent

discussion arose. The first thing taken from the box was a pair of trousers: after various essays, an ingenious savage settled the matter by tying it round his chieftain's neck. Next a couple of waistcoats were buttoned on—one round each of his royal legs. Of course, our obedience and cession of all to the major indicated his chieftainship at once. The hat proved a great mystery, but it was decided to be a most useful drinking utensil, and was repeatedly filled from a neighbouring stream, and handed to the savage despot, who at length flung it in the officious donor's face. What is this? The chief looks sideways into the box, holds up his finger to inculcate silence, and at length cautiously draws out a crinoline. The ladies were at once thrown into a great state of blushes and merriment, and the savages into an equally great state of astonishment. What could it be?—to catch birds? to keep prisoners in? No; the wily monarch found its proper use was to place in your enemy's path: his feet entangle themselves, and before he can recover, a few blows with the assegai, and there you are, as neat as can be. I forget exactly the various uses of the other articles found in the box, but they were all disposed of somehow; and as a finale old Chutney had everything heaped on his devoted head; and Tom Lennox, flinging the crinoline dexterously, netted the chieftain, and dragged him bodily off. As we supposed, nobody could guess the meaning of it, and we had to explain it, to our great ignominy. We then had a very nice supper, and much noise attending it, and under its influence Aunt Scratchley got quite confidential; and if she and old Chutney do not make a match of it (he has been married three times, and is a widower), why I think little Harry may come in for a good thing yet. We all drank each other's health, and wishes for many a merry Christmas, and broke up for the night. As I said before, we never did intend to have such a grand affair; but it has shown us, and I hope it may show others, how fun may be obtained with a little trouble.

THE THREE EXCHANGES IN THE STRAND.

'LUXURIOUS Strand' was the term fitly applied, some two centuries since, by Middleton, the dramatist, to this main artery of our metropolis. In one of his plays he describes the Strand as 'remote from the handicraft scent of the City;' although it did not disdain to imitate the boast of the City. Gresham's Royal Exchange had then been built some forty years, and was celebrated as 'the Eye of London,' its milliners or haberdashers selling 'mouse-traps, bird-cages, shoeing-horns, lanthorns, and Jews' trumps, &c.' This celebrity induced no less a man than Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, Lord High Treasurer to King James I., to enter the field as a competitor with the Royal Exchange; and he built 'The New Exchange' on the site of the thatched stables of Durham House, which fronted the Strand, and which, Strype says, 'were old, ruinous, and ready to fall, and very unsightly in so public a passage to the Court and Westminster.' The plan was similar to that of Gresham's Burse,—cellars below, the ground-floor level with the street, a public walk; and on the upper story stalls or shops, principally occupied by sempstresses and milliners, and other trades that supply dresses. On April 10, 1609, it was begun to be richly furnished with wares, and the next day, King James, the Queen, and Prince Henry, with many great lords and ladies, came to see it, and then the King gave it the name of 'Britain's Burse.' A rich banquet was served on the occasion, at the expense of my Lord Salisbury. A ballad defaming the Royal Exchange, printed in 'Wit Restored,' 1658, elicited an answer containing the following allusion to a tavern that at this period was established in the cellars of the New Exchange:—

'We walk o'er cellars richly fill'd
With spices of each kind,*
You have a tavern underneath,
And so you're undermin'd.

* The cellars of the Royal Exchange on Cornhill.

'If such a building long endure,
All sober men may wonder,
When giddy and light heads prevail,
Both above ground and under.'

The New Exchange did not, however, attain any great success until the Restoration, when London had greatly increased: Covent Garden became the fashionable quarter of the town; and the New Exchange in the Strand was a place of great resort and trade for the nobility and gentry, and so popular, that there is scarcely a dramatist of the Charles II. era who is without a reference to this gay place. Its notabilities were very various. Among its olden theatrical associations, is, that at the 'Eagle and Child,' in Britain's Burse, the first edition of 'Othello' was sold by Thomas Walkley, in 1622. Here Thomas Duffet was originally a milliner, before he took to the stage for subsistence: he wrote, in 1674, the play of 'The Spanish Rogue,' which he dedicated to Nell Gwyn, who, he says, was so readily and frequently doing good, 'as if doing good were not her nature, but her business.' At the sign of the 'Fop's Head,' in 1674, lived Will Cademan, the player and play-publisher. 'At the sign of the "Blue Anchor," in the Lower Walk,' was the shop of Henry Herringham, the chief publisher in London before the time of Tonson. Here Wycherley has laid a scene in his 'Country Wife,' and Etheredge a scene in 'She Would if she Could;' and here Mrs. Brain-sick, in Dryden's 'Limberham,' is represented as giving her husband the slip, pretending to call at her tailor's, 'to try her stays for a new gown.'

A curious picture of the gaiety of the place occurs in 'News from the New Exchange,' 1650, where we read of 'certain ladies called "coursers," whose recreation lies very much upon the New Exchange, about six o'clock at night; where you may fit yourselves with ware of all sorts and sizes. But take heed of my Lady Sandys, for she sweeps the Exchange like a chain'd bullet,

with Mr. Howard in one hand, and Fitz-James in the other.'

The stalls, or shops, in the Exchange had their respective signs; one of which, the 'Three Spanish Gypsies,' was kept by Thomas Radford and his wife, the daughter of John Clarges, a farrier in the Savoy. They sold wash-balls, powder, gloves, &c., and taught plain work to girls. However, higher fortune awaited the farrier's daughter, better known as 'Nan Clarges.' In 1647, she became sempstress to General Monk; she must also have been his laundress, as she used to carry linen to him at the time he was imprisoned in the Tower. Monk's first notice of Nan is believed to have been a flirtation of the Exchange; yet she could never have been attractive by her personal charms; her mother was one of the *Five Women Barbers*, celebrated in her time. Nan is described by Clarendon as a person 'of the lowest extraction, without either wit or beauty,' and Aubrey says 'she was not at all handsome nor cleanly.' In 1649 Nan and her husband, Radford, fell out, and parted. In 1652 she was married, at the church of St. George, Southwark, to General Monk, though it is said that her first husband was living at the time: no certificate of any parish register appears recording his burial, which, however, is not remarkable, owing to the imperfect state of our early registers. In the following year, Nan was delivered of a son, Christopher, who, according to that amusing gossip, John Aubrey, 'was suckled by Honour Mills, who sold apples, herbs, oysters, &c.' The father of Nan, according to Aubrey's 'Lives' (written about 1680), had his forge upon the site of No. 317, on the north side of the Strand. 'The shop is still of that trade,' says Aubrey; 'the corner shop, the first turning, on y^e right hand, as you come out of the Strand into Drury Lane: the house is now built of brick.' The house alluded to is believed to be that at the right-hand corner of Drury Court, now a butcher's; and the adjoining house in the court is a whitesmith's, with a forge, &c. Monk's wife is known to have had great control and autho-

rity over him. Upon his being raised to a dukedom, and her becoming Duchess of Albemarle, her father, the farrier, is said to have raised a Maypole in the Strand, nearly opposite his forge, to commemorate his daughter's good fortune; and the original name of Drury Court was Maypole Alley. Nan died a few days after the Duke, and is interred by his side in Henry VII.'s Chapel, Westminster Abbey. The Duke was succeeded by his son Christopher, who married Lady Elizabeth Cavendish, granddaughter of the Duke of Newcastle, and who died childless. The Duchess' brother, Thomas Clarges, became a physician of note, was created a baronet in 1674; and after his son, Sir Walter Clarges, was named Clarges Street, Piccadilly. This is a romantic story, but of not the only Duchess associated with the New Exchange.

The next event is, however, of a more tragical cast. On a gusty evening in November, 1654, in the open walk of the New Exchange, Don Pantaleo de Sa, brother of the ambassador from Portugal to the Court of Cromwell, came, with two Portuguese friends, to join the promenade. They were conversing together on the affairs of England; and their discourse happening to be in French, a young cavalier who overheard it, and understood the language, told the Portuguese very civilly that they did not represent matters quite correctly. Whereupon one of the Portuguese gave the cavalier the lie; a scuffle ensued, when the three Portuguese fell upon him, threw him upon the ground, and strove to keep him down by kneeling on him; he, however, flung off his adversaries, who renewed the attack, and one of the Portuguese stabbed the cavalier in the shoulder. A Mr. Anthuser then interfered, reproaching the Portuguese for their dastardly attack of three to one; and then, recognising in the individual thus beset a friend of his own, one Colonel Gerard, hastened to draw, with the view of defending him. After some few passes, the Portuguese retreated; they came back in an hour, with

some twenty attendants, cased in breast-pieces and head-pieces, but Gerard and Anthuser had both returned home. Next night, the Portuguese came to the New Exchange, numbering about fifty strong, including Don Pantaleo, two Knights of Malta, and a certain captain clad in buff. They were mostly armed with swords and pistols, and wore either armour or coats of mail; and brought with them, in their coaches, hand-grenades and jars filled with gunpowder and stopped with wax, to burst open the gates of the Exchange, in case they were denied admittance. They had, moreover, boats ready at the water-side, to facilitate their escape in case of need. They entered the building in a body, each with a drawn sword, which so terrified the peaceable people of the Exchange that they sought shelter in the shops. Colonel Mayo, who was among the promenaders in the dusk of the evening, being mistaken for Mr. Anthuser, a pistol was fired, and the word 'Safa' being given as a signal, a dozen armed ruffians rushed upon the Colonel; he, however, defended himself with great gallantry, until a wound in the sword-hand compelled him to drop his weapon, when he was cut and thrust at in all directions, until he fell desperately wounded. At this moment a Mr. Greenway, of Lincoln's Inn, came up to ascertain the cause of the tumult, when he was shot in the head by one of the Portuguese, and died immediately. Several other persons were more or less dangerously wounded. It was but a short distance from the Exchange to the King's Mews,* and the intervening space was not then crowded with houses as at present; the alarm soon reached the Mews, whence a body of Horse-Guards rode down upon the rioters, several of whom were captured. The remainder of the Portuguese fled to the ambassador's house, whither they were pursued by Colonel Whalley, who, having surrounded the embassy with his troops, demanded that the Portuguese should

be given up. The ambassador, insisting upon his privilege, according to the law of nations, refused to deliver up the rioters; and craved time to send to the Lord-General, which being granted, he wrote to complain of the injury, and to desire an audience. Cromwell, however, replied that a gentleman had been murdered, and several other persons wounded, and that justice must be satisfied: he therefore required that all the persons concerned in this outrage should be delivered into his officer's hands, intimating, at the same time, that if he were to remit this demand, and order the withdrawal of the troops, the people would pull down the house, and execute justice themselves. He, moreover, informed the ambassador that when this demand was complied with, he should have audience, and all the satisfaction it was in his power to give him. The ambassador then pleaded hard for his brother and his comrades, promising they should be forthcoming if allowed to remain at the embassy for the night; but this was firmly refused, and the ambassador was compelled to deliver up his brother and the other offenders, who were kept in safe custody that night at St. James's. On the following day, Don Pantaleo and the other prisoners were examined by Lord Chief Justice Rolle, and committed to Newgate to await their trial. Meanwhile, Cromwell not only sought to enforce strict justice upon the murderers of Mr. Greenway, but ordered also that the ambassadorial privilege claimed by Don Pantaleo should receive due consideration; and for this purpose, the most eminent lawyers not agreeing, a Court of Delegates was appointed, to whom was left the decision of the affair. Meanwhile, the Don contrived to escape from Newgate, but was retaken next day. He claimed to be a colleague in the embassy, but this was disallowed, and he was tried with the other prisoners in the Upper Bench of Westminster Hall. Don Pantaleo and an English boy, his servant, were convicted of murder and riot, and sentenced to death; the Don was beheaded upon a scaffold on

* Upon the site of the present National Gallery, Trafalgar Square.

Tower Hill, and the boy was hung at Tyburn. Three of the Portuguese were, according to Lord Clarendon's account, convicted, and were executed at Tyburn; but Zouch states no other to have suffered than the Don and the English boy. The Don was conveyed from Newgate to Tower Hill, in a coach and six horses, in mourning, with a portion of his brother's retinue. On the scaffold, he threw the blame of the quarrel and the murder upon the English. After a few passages of devotion with his confessor, he gave him his beads and crucifix, laid his head on the block, and it was severed from his body at two blows. It is remarkable that Gerard, the cavalier, whose interference led to the affray at the Exchange, and who was the intended victim of the Portuguese, was, a few hours before the Don's execution, in the same place, beheaded for a pretended conspiracy against Cromwell; and that the Don's brother, the ambassador, on the same day, was terrified into a ready signing of articles of peace between the King, his master, and the Protector.

The next incident in the Exchange history is a tale of decayed nobility, which has been set off by the piquancy of Horace Walpole, who writes: 'It is said that [at the Revolution in 1688] the Duchess of Tyrconnell, being reduced to absolute want on her arrival in England, and unable for some time to procure secret access to her family, hired one of the stalls under the Royal Exchange, [Pennant tells it of the New,] and maintained herself by the sale of small articles of haberdashery. She wore a white dress wrapping her whole person, and a white mask, which she never removed, and excited much interest and curiosity.' All the fashionable world went to visit her, and she became known by the name of 'The White Widow.' It was at length discovered that she was no less a person in rank than Frances Jennings, Duchess of Tyrconnell, wife of Richard Talbot, Lord Deputy of Ireland under James II. This lady was the Frances Jennings of De Gram-

mont's 'Memoirs,' and sister to Sarah Jennings, wife of the great Duke of Marlborough. The 'White Widow' preserved her *incognita* at the Exchange but for a few days, when her relatives, who had been ignorant of her extremity, at once provided for her.*

Mr. Cunningham has gathered from the rate books of St. Martin's, under 1673, that the New Exchange was divided into the Outward and Inner Walks below stairs, and similar places above stairs. The Lower Walk was long a common place of assignation. In the Upper Walk you were met with such cries as Otway has preserved to us in his character of Mrs. Furnish, 'Gloves or ribands, sir? Very good gloves or ribands? Choice of fine essences?' The walks were a favourite lounge for the well-dressed folk about town, who conversed with the women at the stalls, and ogled the girls at their needle-work; or, as Gay has pictured one of them on a snowy morning:

'The sempstress speeds to Change with red-tipt nose;

The Belgian stove beneath her footstool glows;
In half-whipt muslin needles useless lie,
And shuttlecocks across the counters fly.'

Trivia, Book II.

Steele, in one of his lively papers in the 'Spectator' (No. 155), has long letters from the Royal and New Exchange on the subject of the indecent license taken in discourse:

'They tell me that a young fop cannot buy a pair of gloves, but he is at the same

* This anecdote was ingeniously dramatised by Mr. Douglas Jerrold, and produced at Covent Garden Theatre, in 1840, as 'The White Milliner.' Mr. Blanchard Jerrold says of his father's elegant little comedy: 'The author was bitterly disappointed that its pointed and tender dialogue, and its brisk action, failed to achieve success; more—as may be gathered from his own words—that personal enmity, carried dishonestly into public criticism, sought to put it aside as a thing in all respects worthless. But his was not a nature to be easily turned from a resolution. Firm resolve took the van with him, throughout his life. It was natural in him, after the failure of "The White Milliner," to write "The Bubbles of the Day;" the piece which, according to Charles Kemble, had wit enough for three comedies.'

time straining for some ingenious ribaldry to say to the young woman who helps them on. It is no small addition to the calamity, that the rogues buy as hard as the plainest and modestest customers they have; besides which, they loll upon their counters half an hour longer than they need, to drive away other customers, who are to share their impertinence with the milliner, or go to another shop.'

And further on, Steele thus happily contrasts the toying at the two Exchanges: 'At the New Exchange they are eloquent for want of cash, but in the City they ought with cash to supply their want of eloquence.'

We need scarcely add that Mr. and Mrs. Pepys were frequently to be seen at the New Exchange: the prince of gossips, having left his wife at home, would, doubtless, say many fine things to the New Exchange girls; though he unreasonably complains that after the great fire of 1666, he could not 'find any place in Westminster to buy a shirt or a pair of gloves, Westminster Hall being full of the people's goods.' Why did he not go to the New Exchange?

In the heyday of its gaiety, the Exchange—'the hive of industrious females,' as Addison called it—made



this part of the Strand a centre of fashion, and its lodging-houses were eagerly sought by country gentlewomen newly come to town. 'That place,' says Pert, in Sir Fopling Flutter, 'is never without a nest of 'em. They are always, as one goes by, glaring in balconies, or staring out of windows.' However, the fashion of the place grew looser and looser: in the 'Tatler,' No. 26, we read of 'a certain lady, who left her coach at the New Exchange door in the Strand, and whipt down Durham Yard into a boat with a young gentleman for Fox-hall' (Vauxhall). There was also a 'Middle Exchange,' which

extended down to the river, handy for gallants to the boats; but the immoralities of this place grew intolerable, and it was removed. The New Exchange ceased to be frequented soon after the death of Anne, and in 1737 it was taken down: it had previously become a place for exhibitions; in 1736, 'The Complete Human Anatomy' was shown here. Various trades were also carried on; it became a looking-glass warehouse, and Mrs. Savage made it a repository for her celebrated stock of foreign and English china.

The accompanying view of the New Exchange is from an exco-

sively rare print, in the collection of the late Mr. Fillinham. The building itself is chiefly remarkable for its extent; the adjoining houses, with ornamented gables and bay-windows, are bits of Elizabethan London. The site of the Exchange is now occupied by the houses Nos. 54 to 64 inclusive, the banking-house of Messrs. Coutts & Co. being the centre. The place is preserved in memory in New Exchange Court, immediately opposite; there are tokens—'neer New Exchange,' in the Beaufoy and other collections.

Exeter Change, a short distance eastward of New Exchange, was a sort of rival establishment; though seventy years elapsed between the erection of the two buildings. De-laune, in 1690, speaks of Exeter Change as lately built;* it occupied the site of Exeter House, named from Thomas Cecil, Earl of Exeter, son of the great Lord Burghley. Upon this spot, three centuries ago, was the parsonage-house of the parish of St. Martin, with a garden and a close for the parson's horse. The Exeter mansion fronted the Strand,



and extended from the garden-wall of Wimbledon House, on the site of D'Oyley's warehouse, to a green lane, the site of the present Southampton Street, westward. The great Lord Burghley completed the mansion with four square turrets: here he was visited by Queen Elizabeth; and here his obsequies were celebrated by a lying-in-state, though Burghley died at Theobalds.

The Change was built as a sort of bazaar, and when Exeter House

was taken down, probably some of the old materials were used in the Change, particularly a pair of large Corinthian columns at the eastern end. Like countless other imitations, the bazaar proved a failure; for Hatton writes of it, in 1708, some twenty years after it was

* Mr. J. H. Burn recollects to have seen on the demolition of the building, in 1830, cut in the stone architrave above the window, at the east end, 'Exeter Change, 1670.'

built: 'The ground was held of the Earl [of Exeter] by lease, and this Exchange built thereon by Dr. Barbon (a very great builder); this, I am told, the Doctor mortgaged to the Duke of Devonshire and Sir Francis Child, who now receive the rents, and the said Earl has the ground-rents. Here are about forty-eight shops below, let to milliners, and rooms for as many above, where much is in the occupation of the Company of Upholsterers.' R. B., in Strype, describes the Change as containing 'two walks below stairs, and as many above, with shops on each side, for sempsters, milliners, hosiers, &c., the builders judging it would come in great request; but it received a shock in its infancy, I suppose, by those of the New Exchange, so that, instead of growing in better esteem, it became worse and worse.' The upper apartments were then let for general purposes. The body of the poet Gay lay in state in the large upper room, in December, 1732, previously to its interment in Westminster Abbey.

After being used for various public uses, the upper story was occupied as a menagerie, successively by Pidcock, Polito, and Cross: fifty years ago, the sight-lover had to pay half a crown to see a few animals confined in small dens and cages in rooms of various sizes, the walls painted with exotic scenery to favour the illusion; whereas now, the finest collection of living animals in Europe may be seen in a beautiful garden for sixpence! The roar of the Exchange lions and tigers could distinctly be heard in the street, and often frightened horses in the roadway. During Cross' tenancy, in 1826, Chunee, the stupendous elephant which had been shown here since 1809, having become ungovernable, was put to death by firing ball to the number of 151! Chunee weighed nearly five tons, and stood eleven feet in height. Cross valued the animal at 1000*l.*; and its den, of solid oak and hammered iron, cost 350*l.* The dissection of Chunee was a mighty labour: the body was raised by a pulley to a cross-beam, and first flayed, which it took twelve active

men near twelve hours to accomplish. Next day (Sunday), the dissection was commenced, Mr. Brookes, Mr. Caesar Hawkins, Mr. Herbert Mayo, Mr. Bell, and other eminent surgeons being present; and there, too, was Mr. Yarrell, the naturalist, to watch the strange operations. The carcase being raised, the trunk was first cut off; then the eyes were extracted; then the contents of the abdomen, pelvis, and chest were removed. When the body was opened, the heart—nearly two feet long, and eighteen inches broad—was found immersed in five or six gallons of blood; the flesh was then cut from the bones, and was removed from the menagerie in carts. Two large steaks were cut off and broiled, and declared, by those who had the courage to partake of them, to be a fine relish. Spurzheim, the phrenologist, who was present, was anxious to dissect Chunee's brain, but Mr. Cross objected, as the crown of the head must then have been sawn off. The skin, which weighed 17 cwt., was sold to a tanner for 50*l.*; the bones weighed 876 lbs.; and the entire skeleton, sold for 100*l.*, is now in the museum of the College of Surgeons, in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Chunee had achieved theatrical distinction: he had performed in the spectacle of 'Blue Beard,' at Covent Garden; and he kept up an acquaintance with Edmund Kean, whom he would fondle with his trunk, in return for a few loaves of bread. The greatness of the Exeter Change menagerie departed with Chunee; the animals were removed, in 1828, to the King's Mews; and Exeter Change was entirely taken down in 1830. The accompanying view is from George Cooke's admirable print of about this date.

In the economy of sights, and shows we have gained considerably upon our predecessors. To-day one of the finest collections of living animals in Europe, the menagerie of the Zoological Society in the Regent's Park, may be seen for one shilling, and occasionally sixpence, whereas sixty years ago the sight cost nearly three times the first-named sum. An advertisement of

1800 runs thus:—‘Since the arrival of the two noble Male Lions at Exeter Change, in the Strand, the concourse of spectators has been considerably more than at any former period since that truly grand Menagerie was first opened. These are both exhibited in the Great Room, with near two hundred other animals, amongst which are four of the largest Bengal Royal Tigers ever seen in this country. Admittance 1s. each. In a separate room are a stupendous Elephant and six Kangaroos from Botany Bay. Admittance 1s. each. Also, in another apartment is an Optical Exhibition, far exceeding anything of the kind hitherto invented. Admittance 1s. each, or the three exhibitions for 2s. 6d. A Skeleton of a Whale, 66 feet long, and perfect in every respect, to be sold cheap.—N.B. Foreign Birds and Beasts bought, sold, or exchanged, by C. Pidcock, as above.’

The following advertisement, of the same date, is ingenious:—‘200 Guineas.—Two Hundred Guineas were offered last week at Exeter Change for one of the Royal Tygers, for the purpose of baiting it with bull-dogs; but the Proprietor, well knowing the dreadful consequences that would follow, would not accept ten times the sum for such a purpose; for of all animals the Tyger is the most terrible, having limbs superior to an ox, and talons that would tear a horse to pieces in a few moments. There are no less than four of these animals at the above place, together with a beautiful Lion, and a variety of Leopards, Panthers, Hyenas, near two hundred in number, and other Foreign Animals, among which is a large Male Elephant, with ivory tusks standing out of his mouth near a yard long.’

The Change extended from the house No. 352 to the site of the present Burleigh Street: it projected into the Strand, where was a range of small shops, in one of which the ‘Literary Gazette’ was long published; and in the house, No. 355, Strand, John Limbird commenced the publication of ‘The Mirror,’ in 1822, for which work the death of the elephant proved a profitable *pièce de circonstance*.

The northern foot thoroughfare of the Strand lay through the lower floor of the Change, where, in the last century, cutlery became the chief merchandise. Here, in 1765, one Thomas Clark took a stall, and stocked it with 1000l., lent him by a stranger. By parsimony and perseverance, he so extended his business as eventually to occupy nearly one-half of the entire floor with the sale of cutlery, turnery, &c. He grew rich, once returned his income at 6,000l. a year, and obtained the title of ‘King of Exeter Change.’ He was penurious in his habits: he dined on his stall, with his plate on the bare board; and his meal, with a pint of porter, never cost him a shilling. He resided in Belgrave Place, Pimlico: morning and evening saw him on his pony, riding into town and home again—and thus he figured in the print shops. He died in 1817, in his eightieth year, and left nearly half a million of money. One of his daughters was married to Hamlet, the celebrated goldsmith of Coventry Street, against whom the tide of fortune turned in strange contrast with the rise of ‘The King of Exeter Change.’

Thus disappeared, one by one, the glories of the Change: the portly beefeater, flaunting in his cast-off finery of scarlet and gold, with his handful of bills of the menagerie; the familiar old Corinthian columns; Cross’ sign-boards; and the little shop, looking eastward, noted for its oyster-suppers—have all departed; the bell which Chunees rang every night at feeding-time is no more heard; and even the clock-face on the house, which originally bore the words Exeter Change in place of the twelve hour numerals, no longer bears that distinction. Nevertheless, the Marquis of Exeter, a lineal descendant of the great Lord Burghley, who still possesses the property of the founder of his family in the Strand and its neighbourhood, attempted, some twenty years since, to resuscitate the olden fame of Exeter Change—the third of the Strand Exchanges—by the erection, upon his estate, of a small Arcade, leading obliquely from

Catherine Street into the newly-formed Wellington Street. Lord Exeter intrusted the design to Mr. Sydney Smirke, the well-known architect, who designed a polygonal compartment at each end of the Arcade, which comprised ten neat shops, with dwellings over. There were 'polychromic arabesque decorations,' imitation bronze gates,

and other ornamentations; and the street fronts, of fine red brick, with stone dressings, were in good Jacobean style. But the public gave the new Exchange 'the cold shoulder,' for the shops were mostly tenantless; the blight of failure, as a place of business or passage, came over the spot; there was an unbroken solitariness in its existence



which became ridiculous. The audience of 'one person in the pit' may be a pleasant joke for the humorist, but not so to the manager; in like manner, the new Arcade exhausted the patience of its proprietor. The site became desirable for part of the design of a new Music Hall fronting the

Strand; and within the year 1863 the Arcade disappeared. Its life was short, but not merry: still hereafter, upon this spot, some fond listener to the sentiment of 'marble halls' may associate, with that masterpiece of Drury Lane lyrics, the fallen fortunes of New Exeter Change.

THE BROTHERS DIDDLEPORT.

AN ACCOUNT OF A SÉANCE LATELY HELD AT THE CHAMBERS OF
JACK EASEL, ESQ.

To the Editor of 'London Society.'

SIR,—I beg to offer for publication in your Magazine the following account of a *séance* lately held at my chambers by the Brothers Diddleport and Mr. Fobsby, in presence of myself and several other distinguished persons, among whom I am permitted to mention Lord Downy, Sir James Greenhorne, Sir Edward Addlepaite, Dr. Gulloway, Captain Pry, Mr. John Gaper, Mr. Y. de Wake, Miss Frumpleigh, the Rev. B. Bellman, M. Chose (author of that celebrated romance '*The Château d'Espagne*'), and Mrs. Muffington. The details of the phenomena which I am about to describe are of such an extraordinary and exceptional nature, that I should myself have been strongly inclined to disbelieve them on any other evidence than my own senses. I shall not, therefore, exact implicit credulity from those of your readers to whom I am not personally known. As for my friends, they are of course free to think as they please. In the following narrative it is my desire to confine myself as much as possible to *facts*. I shall not attempt to theorise on what I saw. Indeed the Brothers Diddleport wish it to be distinctly understood that they do not attribute their mysterious power to spiritual or any other agency. They simply possess a faculty which they can exercise under certain conditions; but of its origin and nature they declare themselves completely ignorant.

We were, altogether, about twenty spectators: of this number about half arrived before the rest, and spent the time before the performance (which was to begin at half-past two o'clock P.M.) in examining the room in which it was to take place. This, I admit, gave me some uneasiness, as several people, the ladies especially, began prying into corners and opening cupboards,

where I had for convenience' sake stowed away sundry pipes, tobacco jars, and a bottle of scheidam, with which I happened to have regaled a friend on the previous evening.

Miss Frumpleigh, in her zeal that nothing should be passed over, put me to some inconvenience, and herself to some confusion, by opening a portfolio containing some of my studies from the Life, which were not intended for public inspection. After a close scrutiny, however, nothing was discovered of any importance except a huge cobweb which hung from the ceiling. It will be hardly necessary for me to say that this was quite accidental. Indeed, if it had been expressly placed there for the occasion it would hardly have availed the Messrs. Diddleport. Mrs. Muffington, however, who is near-sighted, insisted on its removal, which my laundress soon effected with a long broom. This relieved my guests' doubts on the point, although it certainly may have thrown a little dust in their eyes.

We then carefully inspected the wardrobe which was to form the scene of one of the performances, and which had been sent to my chambers on the previous night. It was a gentlemanlike article of furniture, somewhat above the middle height, and of a dark complexion—that is to say, of a mahogany tint. I mention this particularly, as some ill-natured detractors from the good faith of Messrs. Diddleport have stated that it was grained oak, and some have even gone so far as to insinuate that it was stained birdseye maple. There is no foundation for either of these assertions. The cabinet is supported below the plinth by four short, turned legs. To preclude the possibility of collusion, it was moved across the room at the request of some gentlemen,

when one of the legs came off; and it was universally noticed that the cabinet became very unsteady until this portion was replaced, after which, strange to say, it at once resumed its former stability.

There is a small lozenge-shaped hole, or, to speak more correctly, orifice, in the centre of each door. This orifice is from three to nine inches long, and rather less across, except in the part where it is wider. It will be as well to remember these dimensions, as they materially affect a question which my later remarks may raise in the mind of the reader. While adjusting the cabinet in its new site, a portion of the cornice became detached, and we thus had an opportunity of ascertaining that it owed its original adhesion in some measure to the agency of glue. The doors moved with some difficulty on their hinges, and one of the company suggested that this was probably attributable to the fact that the latter had not been oiled recently. I am not, however, in a position to corroborate this opinion. In the interior we found a small piece of whitish-brown paper, which seemed to have formed part of an envelope, or bag. On further examination we discovered that the following words were printed on its surface:—

‘GEORGE BROWN, FANCY BREAD AND
BISCUIT BAKER.’

I made a note at once of the circumstance, but cannot say that I attach much importance to it. My impression is, that the paper had once contained some substance analogous to the nature of a currant bun.

At a quarter past two P.M. the Messrs. Diddleport arrived. They are both young men of slender build, and a remarkably benign and pleasant expression of countenance. They were attired in an ordinary morning costume, and beyond the fact that the taller one wore a stripe on the outer side of his trousers, I do not know that there was any peculiarity in their dress worthy of especial comment. The younger one of the two had an outside pocket to his coat, which excited some atten-

tion; but having cheerfully submitted to be searched, nothing was found in it but a yellow silk pocket-handkerchief, which, in consideration of a severe cold from which he happened to be suffering, was immediately returned to him.

On receiving an intimation from Messrs. Diddleport that they were ready to begin their performance, I sent round to a marine storekeeper's in the adjoining street, and procured a dozen yards of strong rope, such as is used by sailors in the main-top-gallant-mizen-royal yards for reefing binnacles, and excellently adapted for our purpose. I directed the messenger to stop at a music-shop on his way back and bring with him a jews-harp, an Erard's grand pianoforte with all the latest improvements, two banjos, and a penny trumpet. These preliminaries concluded, the Brothers Diddleport stepped inside the cabinet and expressed their willingness to be bound by any of the company present. Sir James Greenhorne and Captain Pry at once volunteered for that office; and in a short time both the performers were securely tied hand and foot, and placed in the outer compartments of the wardrobe. In the centre compartment were deposited all the musical instruments which I have named, except the pianoforte, which, unfortunately, was rather too large to be introduced without dismemberment. The Messrs. Diddleport, however, assured us that, so far as the success of the experiment was concerned, the legs of the piano would suffice. They were, therefore, at once unscrewed and placed along with the rest, having been previously scored with private marks by Mr. Y. de Wake, to preclude the chance of any deception.

The doors were then closed and fastened on the inside. I shall omit any detailed account of the curious and unearthly sounds which proceeded from the cabinet. It suffices to say that the jews-harp began to burr, the banjos to thrum, and the penny trumpet to squeak with extraordinary energy, and in the most horrible discord. Stranger than all, the few first bars of a

popular melody, apparently executed on a pianoforte, issued from the wardrobe, although the *keys of that instrument were perfectly motionless, as it lay flat on the floor of the room.* We also distinctly heard the jingling accompaniment of some brazen instrument. This was afterwards explained to be caused by an electro-biological current passing through the castors, which were then immediately called into sympathetic activity with the notes outside.

In addition to these phenomena, I must not forget to mention that the doors of the cabinet, *although bolted from within, repeatedly flew open, and the legs of the pianoforte were ejected with great violence.* This I can the more conscientiously aver, because the owner of the instrument afterwards complained that it had been very badly used, and sent in a long bill for damages, which I had to pay.* The legs, on being examined, were found identical with those which had been placed in the cabinet. The doors were now once more closed, and to prevent the slightest suspicion of trickery, the lights, at the request of the performers, were nearly extinguished. One candle, however (a Child's night-light), was allowed to burn, and by its rays, after a short interval, we could plainly distinguish a phantom hand which appeared at the orifice above mentioned. When the latter first came into view, it was presented with the palm towards the audience, and was waved gently to and fro. But at length it slowly turned round edgewise, if I may so describe it; the fingers gradually separated from each other, and became violently agitated, the little finger being stretched out nearest the audience and the thumb remaining just inside the plane of the door-panel. Mr. Gaper subsequently told me that on this occasion the thumb appeared to him to be in close contact with the semblance of a human

nose, and that he particularly noticed the fact, because it called to mind a familiar gesture used by street-boys to each other. If this were really the case, it seems to me to exhibit quite a new feature in this extraordinary phenomenon.

On the room being reilluminated, we opened the doors of the cabinet, and discovered the Messrs. Diddleport tightly bound as before, with every appearance of not having moved from the spot. Indeed the younger brother had experienced some inconvenience from being unable in this position to reach his pocket-handkerchief. I forgot to mention that while the cabinet doors were closed we heard some one sneeze twice distinctly. This circumstance, coupled with the fact of the catarrh above mentioned, excited no surprise at the moment; but it is remarkable that, when the younger brother (with the cold) was found to be on the right-hand side of the wardrobe, several people in the room remembered that the sound had proceeded from the left. Dr. Gulloway and some other scientific gentlemen present professed themselves utterly unable to account for this phenomenon.

After the elder brother had been untied, and while he still remained inside the cabinet, the door being partially opened, Lord Downy, who stood with his back to it and with his face to the audience, felt himself hit pretty smartly in the region of the dorsal vertebrae, and at once turned round, declaring that some one had struck him. The first impression was that it had been by the elder Diddleport, but that gentleman, on being interrogated, declared that he was as much surprised at the circumstance as his lordship himself, and could only conclude it had been done by a spirit hand. In this supposition all the party at once concurred. Mr. Y. de Wake now entered the cabinet, and sat between the two young men, his hands being right and left on each, and (to preclude any doubt of his good faith) tightly secured to their persons. The doors were then closed, and the Babel of sounds recommenced. Several hands ap-

* The account made out in the owner's name, and settled with the usual stamped receipt, may be seen on application at my chambers between 10 and 4.

peared at the orifice, among them the hand of an old soldier. After a space of from three to thirty minutes, Mr. Y. de Wake returned to the company, and affirmed that he was very glad to do so. It appears that, although his own hands were tightly bound, he distinctly felt other hands pawing his face, tweaking his nose, and pulling his hair. He assured us that it would have been utterly impossible for him to have done any of these things himself without knowing it. The instruments at his feet rose up; the piano legs danced round him, occasionally coming in violent contact with the tibia or shin-bone of his leg. This struck him all the more forcibly, because the tibia of ancient days was itself a musical instrument;* and it was suggested that this may have caused some sympathy between the mahogany and the human leg. In addition to this, the banjo also floated upwards, playing a wild and plaintive air, and marking the time with emphatic blows at the back of his head. The penny trumpet uttered several piercing shrieks, as if in earnest supplication, while the jews-harp, after burring about his ears for some time, and making several ineffectual attempts to get into his waistcoat pocket, finally alighted on the bridge of his nose with a short cry of triumph. While these phenomena were going on, Mr. Y. de Wake assured us that he distinctly heard sounds which resembled stifled laughter at opposite corners of the cabinet, inside.

I omit mentioning other phenomena; an account of which, including some curious speculations thereon, has appeared elsewhere.

The next part of the *seance* was performed completely in the dark. One of the Messrs. Diddleport and Mr. Fobsby seated themselves amongst us. Two ropes were thrown at their feet, and in less than 2 min. 35.093 sec., as near as I could calculate, they were found tied hand and foot, their hands be-

hind their backs bound tightly to their chairs, their chairs bound to an adjacent table, the table tied to an ottoman, the ottoman firmly secured to a sideboard, and the sideboard nailed to a wall against which it stood. While this process was going on, the legs of the piano ran swiftly out of the cabinet and attached themselves firmly to the body of that instrument as it lay on the floor; the banjo rose from the table where it had been placed, and swung or floated round the room and over the heads of the company, several of which it briskly tapped in its transit through the air. A phosphoric light, accompanied by an awful smell of sulphur, gleamed out at intervals from different corners of the room, but, strange to say, did not illumine any of the visitors, who remained as much in the dark as ever. The jews-harp and the penny trumpet were distinctly heard performing the air of 'Home, Sweet Home.' This was considered to be a pointed allusion to the eminent spiritualist of that name, and excited much sensation. The bells throughout the house rang violently, and several double knocks were heard at the front door. One of the ottoman cushions was thrown with great violence at the head of Sir Edward Addlepaite, causing that gentleman to utter a sudden and cursory ejaculation. Mr. John Gaper, holding a banjo with both hands, requested that it might be plucked from his grasp, and it was almost immediately taken from him. Mr. Y. de Wake made a similar request with regard to his watch and chain, and shortly afterwards felt a hand tugging at those articles, but he stoutly, and I think very properly, resisted the attempt.

Mr. Fobsby then expressed a wish that his coat might be removed from his back. The words had no sooner passed his lips than the sound of a violent disrobing ensued; and here occurred one of the most extraordinary incidents in the *seance*. A light was struck before the garment (a most elegant article, by-the-way) had quite left Mr. Fobsby's shoulders, and it was seen quitting him like a spread eagle, the sleeves and

* 'Quem virum aut heroa lyra, vel acri
Tibia sumes celebrare, Clio?'

Hor. *Od.* xii.

skirts being stretched out diagonally in opposite directions. This elicited a general exclamation of surprise. It flew up towards the chandelier, where it hung for some seconds, swinging backwards and forwards, *à la* Leotard, after which it dropped to the ground, apparently exhausted by the effort; but on the lights being completely extinguished again, it rushed, or, to speak more correctly, *was rushed** back to its place on Mr. Fobsby's shoulders. Indeed, that gentleman was discovered, shortly afterwards, wearing it in the usual manner, except that the sleeves were turned completely inside out.† It must be remembered that all this time the cords, which were bound tightly round Mr. Fobsby's chest and arms, *outside* his coat, had not slackened in the least from their original position. Mr. Fobsby subsequently expressed his willingness to repeat the performance with his waistcoat, or any other portion of his dress. After some consultation, however, this offer was declined.

During the above performance the boot-soles of Mr. Fobsby and young Diddleport, to obviate the vaguest breath of suspicion, had been carefully numbered by Captain Pry, who wrote down the corresponding figures in his pocket-book, without showing them to another soul in the room until after the performance, when they were found to correspond exactly with those which had been marked on the leather. As some curiosity has been evinced on the part of the public to know the conditions observed by spectators during this portion of the *séance*, I may mention that we were all required to sit round in a circle holding each other's hands; and it was given out by Mr. Fobsby, that though this position was by no means compulsory, nor

even essential to the success of these experiments, any one who let go his neighbour's hand, or budged from the chair even for an instant, was liable to have his head broken by the banjo; and he added that, as in the course of his experience he had known some severe accidents occur in this manner, he earnestly conjured us all to keep our seats. I obeyed the injunction implicitly myself; indeed, could hardly have done otherwise had I been so inclined, for I chanced to sit between Miss Frumpleigh and Mrs. Muffington, who either through fright, or from some other reason which I cannot divine, seized hold of my fingers with a grip of fervour which is more easily imagined than described.

The performers sat, not within, but outside the circle of spectators, which included everybody else in the room except the elder Diddleport, who would have joined us himself had he not expressed a fear that in doing so he might have endangered the success of the experiment. He explained this afterwards by stating, that though he possessed the mysterious power of engendering the electro-biological current, he was not himself a good conductor of it, and that, as his presence in the ring frequently arrested its progress, he had found that the phenomena could only be insured by his remaining outside. Dr. Gulloway said that he fully comprehended the force of this argument, which he at once proceeded to illustrate by analogy. Sealing-wax and glass, he remarked, were both active agents of electricity under certain conditions, but each was found to be what, in the scientific world, is called a non-conductor. This interpretation, coming from such an eminent authority as the doctor, satisfied every one present. Indeed, it is only justice, both to the Brothers Diddleport and Mr. Fobsby, to add that they offered to submit to any reasonable test of their good faith which might be imposed. No suggestion, however, was made, except by Sir Edward Addlepaité, who thought it would be advisable to drop sealing-wax on the closed fists of the performers, and affix his signet

* There is, of course, a difference between the two expressions; but I prefer to use that which was lately employed in the description of (if possible) a still more wonderful *séance*.

† The reader may not quite see how a coat under these circumstances could have been worn *in the usual manner*; but of course this formed part of the phenomenon.

thereto. It would then be impossible for them to use their hands without the knowledge of the audience. The Brothers Diddleport said they could raise no objection to this scheme, provided the worthy baronet would first try the effect on his own fingers. This, however, after some hesitation, he declined to do, and the matter then dropped.

I forgot to mention that, during the first part of the performance, and while the Brothers Diddleport were incarcerated in the wardrobe, a long and delicate female foot, enclosed in an elegant Balmoral boot with a military heel and remarkably high instep, quivered for some seconds in the air. The ankle was well-turned, and drew an almost involuntary shout of admiration from all the gentlemen present; while the ladies indicated their surprise and, at the same time, their sense of propriety in a sort of subdued shriek. I may also observe that, during the above manifestations, several of the spirit hands were touched and grasped by Miss Frumpleigh, who stated that, to the best of her belief, they were all gloved, but that the kid, as far as she could judge, was not of a first-rate quality. In her opinion the gloves belonged to the class of goods known as 'Alpine,' which averaged one and ninepence the pair. The size varied from 'long sixes' to seven and a half. One bore unmistakable evidence of having been cleaned with benzine collas.

At the conclusion of the *séance*, a general conversation ensued on the subject of the marvels which we had heard of and witnessed. The general opinion seemed to be that we were in duty bound to assure the Brothers Diddleport and Mr.

Fobsby that, after a very impartial trial and the closest scrutiny of their proceedings, the only conclusion we could arrive at was, that none of us could offer any explanation on the matter, except that, if there had been trickery in any form, confederates, or machinery, we had been utterly unable to detect either the one or the other. This was unanimously agreed upon, and the Messrs. Diddleport—who, I regret to say, have suffered under the most unfounded imputations—felt much gratified at this announcement.

Lord Downy was then asked to sign a certificate to the effect that the wardrobe manifestation seriously alarmed him. His answer was, 'Not if I know it.' I regret that the ambiguous nature of this reply has since caused some errors to arise in the public press. The natural inference in our mind was, of course, that his lordship meant that his fright would cease if he could discover any adequate cause for the phenomena. It appears, however, that this was not the case. Instead of any apprehension on the part of his lordship, there was only a little misapprehension in the minds of his hearers. We all, however, agreed to state freely in the elevated society in which we respectively moved that, so far as our limited capabilities permitted us to judge, we were quite incompetent to form any opinion on the subject at all, except that we knew nothing whatever about it. To this resolution all the party promptly and cheerfully acceded.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
JACK EASEL.



In Memoriam.

JOHN LEECH, OBIT OCTOBER XXIX. M.DCCC.LXIV.—ÆTAT 46.

I.

CALLED in a moment suddenly away,
 He passed from life, while ringing in his ears
 Had been no sound of sob or falling tears
 But laugh of happy children at their play.

II.

Not old, but in the staid and ripened prime
 Of a man's life he fell; and in an hour
 When least of all was pictured sorrow's power
 To veil in gloom that stretch of merry time.

III.

Yet the cord snapped beneath the hidden strain
 Of o'er-wrought brain and tortured nerves, whose strength,
 Taxed to the uttermost, gave way at length,
 When ended swiftly all the spirit's pain.

IV.

So died he. From the ranks of living men
 Whose thought and fancy are their nation's prize—
 Work light, perchance, but tending to make wise—
 Magicians of the pencil and the pen—

V.

He who is dead stood foremost. Though each scene
 He drew was taken from our life of prose,
 Yet in each one he dealt his trenchant blow
 Against all things and teachings false or mean

VI.

On this our social stage. And if the chief
 Mark stamped upon his labours was the play
 Of humour and of fancy, yet the day
 Which took him—to a nation's honest grief—

VII.

Took the best limner of each lovely face
 Of English pure girl-beauty. None have yet
 Equalled him *thus*—none seeing can forget
 His cabinet of loveliness. His place

VIII.

Is all unfilled in English art. His name
 Is and will still be loved by thousands—those
 Who have hung o'er the pictures whence arose
 Slowly but sure the structure of his fame.

IX.

Kind! gentle! true! His life of modest worth
 Is known to those who prize it. Now he sleeps:
 And many a one who knew it sadly weeps
 That kindly heart laid in its mother earth.

W. R.

GOING TO THE CATTLE SHOW.

NO one, no, not my bitterest enemy, can accuse me of pleasure-seeking; I defy them. The five-and-twenty years I have lived a dutiful wife and thrifty mistress at Slowmansleigh, like any snail in its shell—five-and-twenty years come blackberrying—I have never had a day out with my husband but once a year or so, at most; and then never till the lambing is over, and the hay saved, and the shearing done, and the corn carried, and one is worn out with work, and all the fine weather gone by. So that when we make up our minds for a day's enjoyment, I think I have as much reason to respect it as if I had bought and paid for it in lawful money down; and I ask any sensible human being whether I am not right?

Now to reflect upon all I went through last Thursday, the very recollection makes my blood boil; as well it may when I think of the infamous— But I will proceed as calmly as my stinging nerves will let me, and will show some people that 'mother's temper, when she is up,' is no worse than the lion's roaring in the play we went to see last winter at Arrowbridge theatre, when the actor declared he would 'aggravate his voice to roar as sweet as any sucking pig.' My goodness! Didn't we laugh! I never shall forget in all my born days when the man came in again with a real donkey's head on his shoulders—(what was his name? it had something to do with it)—and that bold young woman with nothing but a frill of gauze round her waist! Oh, it was shameful! I wonder the police don't put down those Shakspeare's plays; but they never do what they ought. When there is a row they merely rap the heads of the little boys outside the crowd, and encourage the fighting.

Well, I and my husband, Anthony Slowman, (a better fellow never breathed the air of heaven before marriage and [the Oddfellows,] with our daughter Keziah, fixed on going

to the grand West of England Agricultural Show which took place, as everybody knows, at Xeter, on Thursday last. Not that I cared a bit about it; I never did. 'What's the use,' as I remarked to Squire Jilly, of Brimblebog, but the other day— 'what on earth is the use of fattening a pig till it cannot see out of the eyes which were given it by a good Providence to see with?' No, mark my words, there is sin and wickedness enough in the world without that. Give me one of your home-bred porkers with legs that it can stand upon, and streaks of lean in the fat, and not go flying in the face of Nature with Thorley's food to produce an animal as full of oil as an olive.

They told us the train would leave Arrowbridge station at eight o'clock; and as those impudent young railway clerks always try to annoy people by putting their clocks ever so much before the proper time, I insisted on breakfast at five, and the trap ready to drive in at six to the minute; though we need not have done so as it happened, for Keziah and myself had to sit like monuments in a cathedral for three quarters of an hour outside the station, before they came to open the doors, while Slowman kept kicking his heels and whistling, till he worked me into a fever with his fidgets. Some folks are always so ready with their 'Didn't I say so?' and 'I knew how it would be,' as though they were wiser than King Solomon. But men are so provoking!

At length there was quite a crowd assembled, and others coming in parties every minute, so I suppose they thought it was time for the play to begin, for they rang the telegraph bell, and up went the little door where they give out the tickets.

'Now then, Mrs. S.,' says Slowman, 'which class shall it be, bare boards or cushions, or shall we run behind?'

'Mr. Slowman, I am ashamed of

you,' I replied; 'you will be joking in church next.'

So I walked straight up to the counter, and spoke as loud as I could, for there were plenty to hear me—'Three first-class carriage tickets and no bad half-crowns in the change, please,' and then went on and left Slowman to pay the damage. As if we were going in common second class with all the tradespeople and scruff of the town! Keziah and myself were not dressed for nothing, I can assure you.

Out upon the platform it was worse than May fair. Hundreds upon hundreds I should say; I thought we should never get to the waiting-room. French pianos going, and men selling ginger-beer and cherries, which reminded me of my little basket and shawl that I had put down by the door outside, and which, I need not add, I have never set eyes upon since.

For more than two hours I remained fanning myself with my handkerchief. I was ready to faint with heat and vexation, for my best gloves were lost in the basket, and Slowman had left me, as he said, to see about when the trains returned in the evening (such a mockery, when there was not even a sign of one starting!), and Keziah kept whispering with some one at the half-opened door; till, at last, I lost all patience, and burst wildly out on the platform, resolved to find what Slowman was up to, or to perish in the attempt. 'Keziah,' I cried hysterically, as I passed the bold girl, who pretended afterwards that she had not been talking to young Bullock who farms the next estate to ours, as if I had no eyes, and did not see him turning away from the door as I came out. 'Keziah!' I said, and seizing her by the arm I dragged her forward like a Samson to the edge of the platform, when, whirr! went by a steam-engine with carriage after carriage. I screamed out with all my might, for it was a mercy and miracle we escaped destruction; and as it was, a rough fellow, seizing me by the gown, tore my flounce to a rag in his endeavours to save us.

Whilst I was putting myself

straight, and scolding Keziah right and left for what had happened, up came Slowman with his mouth so full he could scarcely speak, though he was trying to hide it by wiping the froth of Guinness's porter from his lips with a new silk handkerchief, cost seven shillings last Whitsuntide.

'Here's a pretty go!' he said; 'do you know, my dear (the hypocrite! merely to cover the refreshments!), we shall have to wait here another hour at least, as this train will not stop?'

I could have slapped any one in the face.

'Not stop!' said I—

But at that moment some one close by affirmed that the train was returning to take up a few; and sure enough it came backwards into the station some minutes afterwards, with the passengers glaring out of the carriage windows at us like red-hot wild beasts.

The hollaoing and shouting that ensued was fearful. Talk of electioneering, it is nothing to an excursion train! You only wanted the candidate to fling dead rats and garbage at, and you would have believed yourself back, at the time of the Reform Bill, when Uncle Trueblue's windows were broken, and poor Aunt Plumper miscarried with twins.

'I will never go by this horrid train,' I cried, as Slowman, all excitement, was tugging like a madman at the handle of a third-class door. 'You may kill me on the spot if you like, Mr. Slowman, but nothing upon earth shall induce me to go by it—there!'

I turned upon my heel and shut my eyes, and pushed straight before me till I found myself again in the waiting-room, where through the window I could see Slowman running from carriage to carriage, as though the last day were come, and this was the only train to heaven. How he could so demean himself! I blushed for him. Though for the matter of that, the people were all the same, just as if they had whittings tied to their tails. I couldn't keep from talking to myself, as I stood there, to see them; and I fairly stamped when I caught sight of

our Keziah, as wild as any, hurrying off with that young Bullock, with the fellow's arm round her waist. The girl is mad, I thought, for I was beyond speech. Presently the door was dashed open, and in bounced young Bullock, out of breath.

'Make haste, ma'am, make haste! We have kept a capital corner for you, though it is only in a cattle truck they have put on behind.'

'Away, serpent!' I cried; and sinking upon a chair, my feelings overcame me, and I dissolved in tears.

A piercing steam whistle, whose excruciating shrillness turned my skin into gooseflesh, roused me from my misery. With my fingers in my ears I rushed to the door just in time to see Slowman dragged from an open carriage window which he had attempted to enter while the train was moving from the platform, when the porters had secured him by the heels, and pulled him ignominiously forth like a thief. I laughed scornfully, for I was half glad to behold him punished for his desertion and neglect of the wife of his bosom.

'If ever there was a finger of Providence,' I said as he came up to where I stood, looking sheepish enough as you may suppose—if ever there was a finger of Providence, Slowman, that was one!

I am good-tempered enough if everything goes smooth, nobody can deny that; or if they do, I will go further and show them that folks are never so put out as when they are contradicted flat. No lamb but would feel mortified at being left behind by an excursion train; no lamb but would be in tantrums at it. It is as much as to say you are not good enough for our company. Now I have my own opinion on that matter, and I will never sit under anybody's footstool, that I am determined. Consequently I do not mind admitting, that for the next two hours Slowman led a pretty life of it with me, and I have no doubt he was quite sincere in wishing himself at home and me at Jericho, though he need not have put himself to the trouble of repeating that wish

so often as he did. If it had not been that Keziah was actually gone on with that young Bullock, 'who,' said I, 'if he does not take care may find himself figuring at the Xeter assize court some fine day for abduction or arson, or something worse.' If it had not been for that, and that they kept on deceiving us with the promise of another special train coming every instant, I should have turned round and walked myself back every step of the way to Slowmansleigh, and have entered an action against the railway company the very next day for 'breach of promise,' and would have had the Lord Chancellor to lay the damages.

I may be deceived, for I am not the Pope of Rome, but I believe it was half-past ten or a quarter to eleven—I won't be particular to a minute—I only know the telegraph wires were buzzing so, that I expected each moment they would go off like a gun—when we saw the up signal turn slowly round, by which we knew our train was coming in at last. People had begun to look blank and limp with waiting, but now they bustled about as lively as crickets, and swarmed like ants in and out of the offices.

It is a matter of history how Jessie, the Flower of Dunblane, sang 'The Campbells are coming,' at the relief of Lucknow; but I never knew what it was to enter into her feelings, poor thing, till I heard the whistle of the engine and saw that train come sailing alongside the platform. I could have kissed the stoker for joy, though he was as sooty as a sweep. There was no room to spare, so people tumbled in just wherever they could. Luckily, Slowman and I found a beautiful carriage with a lamp burning on the top to prevent taking liberties in the tunnels, and a wool footing up to one's ankles, and cloth linings that would have been comfortable enough had it been winter, instead of a broiling sun, and the perspiration running in peas down one's face. It smelt rather fusty too, that's a fact, and I was scandalized to see the moths walking in and out of holes just as they do o' Sundays

in the faded green baize of Squire Jilly's pew in church directly the organ begins.

A polite gentleman with large whiskers and a gold chain, worth a mint of money, sat opposite to me, and a more genteel Romeo-and-Juliet looking fellow I never saw. The curl of his moustachios spoke volumes of military romance. It seemed to me he must have been bred up in the Castle of Otranto, and that he held the Horse Guards in his pocket. There were three others in the carriage whose appearance I did not much regard, but he was as polite as could be, offering to let up and down the windows, and helping me in all manner of ways, quite a pattern to Slowman. Besides these there was a countryman with a large bundle which he pushed in under my seat, and a young lady, dressed to death, as they say, with a hat that would have turned Keziah's brain could she have seen it.

What with the heat and standing about, I could scarcely keep my eyes open; and I had not been seated a minute before I forgot all about the roses at the back of my bonnet, and resting my head so that they must have been squeezed into a pancake, I dropped asleep as sound as a roach, and woke up three minutes afterwards under the impression we were arrived at Xeter. Nothing of the sort. There was a porter at the window asking to see our tickets, and Slowman was slapping one pocket and then another as if that would create them, and then at last had to confess that he had handed them over to Keziah to take care of. Of course the money had to be paid again, and the gentleman opposite with the large whiskers and watch-chain I fancied eyed Slowman's purse quite rudely when he took it out. For though it was but a common leather bag, there was plenty of lining to it that is certain. Then, as they make a point of doing, the porter must needs open the door and slam it again with all his might, hawling out 'All right,' as if he would insult us to the last; whereby my dress got jammed, and the next time I

moved it tore a quarter of a yard three-cornered rent. With a screech like my godmother used to give when she sang, 'There was an old woman all skin and bone' (which is always associated in my mind with the smell of hot punch and the wind rumbling in the chimney), the engine dragged us sulkily out of the station, and of course you may suppose we were off at last. Nothing of the kind, bless your heart! They simply shunted us on to the middle line, no better than so many luggage vans; and there we stuck simmering and spitting (that is, the engine, you understand) till the clock had struck twelve, the express train passing malignantly up before us! I should have burst with spite had not some one sensibly proposed a game of cards. Croquet would have been more genteel, but Keziah was not with us, and there would scarcely have been room, I expect, even if we had had the balls. The polite gentleman with the large whiskers and watch-chain took a deal of persuasion, unless, as he said, the ladies would play. I was ready at once; but after the first game, which I lost, I felt so sleepy I could not go on, so he made up a rubber of whist with Slowman and two of the others.

I never woke until after three o'clock, just as the train reached Xeter. Everybody was complaining of the scandalous way in which we had been detained on the road, and Slowman was cursing and biting his nails worse than any.

The countryman, who, I told him, had no right in our carriage with a third-class ticket, wanted to get at his bundle, but I would not budge an inch, till he let out that it was a butt of bees, and that he merely wished to see if they were safe. Good gracious! I wonder I did not go straight out of the window, like a Jack-in-the-box. 'Lor, missus, you needn't squall so,' said the man (I give it in the low creature's own words; and upon my honour I only exclaimed, 'Gemini! Slowman!') and leapt up, creeping all over, as well I might). The polite gentleman with the large whiskers and watch-chain caught hold of my

dress; for I dare say he expected to see me every instant through the window, and a coroner's inquest sitting on me; and one of the others made me change places with him, though it was but a moment before we all got out at Xeter station, where the crowd was so great I lost sight of them instantaneously, though I looked everywhere to thank them for their politeness: for I was determined to shame Slowman, who I verily believe would have seen me stung to a strawberry without lifting a finger, he looked so glum.

Will you believe it? The Horticultural Exhibition was closed; and just as we reached the cattle-yard a violent tempest came on, and we were drenched to the skin, while the lightning was awful.

'My dear Slowman,' I said (I am always affectionate in a thunderstorm)—'my dearest husband, let us go back.'

And back we went, as fast as our legs could carry us, to a pastry-cook's in the High Street, where we found our Keziah and young Bullock in the long room behind the shop, with a lot of others as merry as grigs around a table covered with chops and steaks and sausage rolls, drinking Allsopp's pale ale in long glasses and talking sixteen to the dozen. It was still thundering, and I had not the heart to scold the girl, who indeed did seem overjoyed to see us, and kissed me again and again, and whispered she had a secret to tell me. Now, if I have a weak point it is to hear a secret. I believe if I were fighting a deadly duel with broadswords, and my adversary whispered she had a secret to tell me, I should throw down my arms at once. So I smiled at Keziah, and said there would be time enough for that by-and-by. For one should never listen to a secret directly. Waiting makes one's mouth water whether it is for currants or kisses. And I can tell you it is much nicer to put a secret off for a while, like a letter, which I always carry in my apron pocket for an hour before opening.

Down I sat and began to eat, for I had tasted nothing all day,

and the beefsteaks were done to a turn, and such baked potatoes, for all the world like snowballs in curl-papers! Slowman had been out of the room with that young Bullock, and now came back looking more cheerful than when he had a legacy left him. I own it exasperated me to see him so hand and glove with that young fellow; and I was preparing to say something very biting to the young scamp, who looked as if butter would not melt in his mouth, when we all know Arrowmore cheese would not choke him, when all at once our Keziah exclaimed—

'Why, father, do you know you have Mr. Bullock's purse stuck in your waistcoat pocket?'

Slowman went immediately as red as a lobster.

'Yes, my dear,' he said, hesitating, and looking at me. 'The fact is, I may as well out with it; I lost every penny I had, playing at cards in the train with a lot of blessed sharpers'—not that Slowman employed the term 'blessed,' but if you understand irony you may guess what he used—and Bullock here has been kind enough to offer to lend—'

'No, Mr. Slowman,' I interrupted, cutting him short, as I laid down my knife and fork, and rose with dignity. 'Never shall it be said that you were beholden to that—I paused to give it emphasis—to that—gentleman. Since, Mr. Slowman, you cultivate a taste for gambling, and are become so childish as not to be capable of taking care of your money, it is well for you that you have a wife whose purse is at your disposal. Take it,' I said, imitating, as near as I could, Lady Macduff's tone, in the play, when she murders sleep, and plunging my hand in my pocket—

My conscience! I thought I should have dropt. There was nothing in it.

Upon examination, we found that my dress had been cut with a sharp instrument, and I as innocent as an unborn babe of it, and my purse stolen. Up went my hands and eyes. 'Well,' I cried, 'this beats Banagher, as the Irishman said,'

and, turning about, who should I see at a corner table but the polite gentleman with the large whiskers and watch-chain, whom I knew directly, although he was holding up a newspaper before him. The minute he saw me he laid down the paper and stretched his legs, and took up his hat, and moved to the chimney-glass in a leisurely sort of way, and then was about to pass by us out of the room. What possessed me I cannot think, but I touched him on the arm, and asked if he might have seen my purse which I had lost in the railway carriage.

'My good woman,' he answered, as grand as Doomsday, staring like a stone above my head, 'what are you talking about? Is the creature insane?' he added, waving his hand to Keziah to let him go by.

You may imagine how I felt.

'Do you mean to say,' I demanded, all aghast at his impudence, 'that we did not travel together in the same carriage this morning?'

He tapped his forehead significantly, looking round on the others and shaking his head (the scoundrel!).

'Poor thing! she ought to be confined in an asylum. Never saw her in all my life before, 'pon my honour.'

A suspicion instantly darted into my mind.

'It is my belief, you villain, you took the purse yourself,' I called out.

He made no reply, but tried to push by Keziah. I was determined he should not escape, if he had been a Hercules and I a midge: so I caught hold of his shoulder, held my breath, and clung like a leech. When he found he could not shake me off, he called for the mistress of the shop, and asked in a lordly manner whether she did not know the name of Captain Blackball, at the same time throwing down a card as if he were the Champion at the Queen's coronation. He wanted to know whether she called her refreshment-rooms respectable. He asked what she meant by it; and declared he had been grossly insulted, and that he would prosecute 'that female' (meaning myself), and

all who aided and abetted her, with the utmost rigour of the law. The shopwoman curtsied, and said she was sure she did not know any of us, but that she was perfectly astounded at any female accusing a captain in the army. At the same moment a gentleman and lady came on out of the back room, the gentleman calling out in a light, airy tone as he passed, 'Good-bye, captain; we shall see you to-night at the Park!' and then stopping, apparently surprised at the scene.

'Oh, ma'am,' I cried to the lady, whom I recognized at once by her hat, 'did we not travel together to-day, ma'am, in the same carriage with this gentleman with the large whiskers and the watch-chain?'

She stared at me for a minute, and then smiling languidly to the shopwoman, said, 'There is evidently some mistake. The woman is crazed. Come, captain, you will go with us.'

I could scarcely believe my senses. You might have tripped me up with a gossamer. I turned to Slowman to support my evidence; but neither he nor young Bullock were visible, and Keziah was crying like the rain.

I let go my hold on the captain's coat, and they had reached the door, when it was blocked up by young Bullock and a policeman, and the next instant brought Slowman and two or three more of the police, who made no ado but slipped handcuffs at once upon the captain and his fine friends, who turned out to be a part of a gang of awindlers that had been pocket-picking in every direction through the town. My purse was discovered the very first thing in the captain's pocket; so I got it again without the loss of a single pennypiece; for which you may be sure I was thankful enough to remember in my prayers; not that I cared so much for the money as for the little gilt thimble which had belonged to my godmother's aunt, to whom it had been given by her nurse's cousin, when she was a child in the mumps; and has been an heirloom in the family ever since.

Of course there was congratula-

tion between us all. You would have taken that pastrycook's shop for the Houses of Parliament in debate, there was such a jabber; and I caught myself gossiping with at least six people at once, without knowing one of them, and shaking hands with young Bullock for his good service, before I was aware of what I was doing. I could not but be grateful to him, you know. He and Slowman then left us to go before the magistrates or something, and they tell me I shall myself have to appear as a witness when those light-fingered gentry are brought to trial. I have, however, made up my mind to be in bed that day with a sick headache or something infectious, even if I have to drink mustard and water to produce it. The barristers shall never have an opportunity of playing off their tricks on me, with their—'Now, Mrs. Slowman, speak up that the jury may hear you,' or 'Remember you are upon your oath, ma'am.' Oh, I have heard and seen poor witnesses worried into swearing black is white, and badgered to tears

many a time in the course of justice!

That was the tea we made when Slowman and young Bullock returned, and we all sat down in the pastrycook's back room, with kidneys and broiled ham that would have made a Jewish cardinal break his fast of a Friday! It is my firm conviction, and you would never turn me from it were you to talk within an inch of your life, that we should not have moved to this day had not the omnibus called to take us back to the railway station. For Keziah had whispered her secret; namely, that old Mr. Bullock, who I will say is a most respectable man, and owns more property than half the gentry round—that old Mr. Bullock had taken a nice estate for his son, about four miles from Slowmansleigh, and that young Bullock had—

There now I am beginning to cry again. It is very foolish, but I cannot help it. I suppose they will be married in the spring, and that will be the result of our going to the Cattle Show.

OLD LETTERS.

How quick we credit every oath,
And hear her plight the willing troth!
Fondly we hope 'twill last for aye,
When lo! she changes in a day.
This record will for ever stand,
'Woman, thy vows are traced in sand.'

LORD BYRON.

FAIR with the fairness of Dead Sea fruit;
True with the truth of a siren's smile;
Instinct with soul as an unplayed lute;
Expert of fraud as a serpent's wile—

If she to-morrow will wed for gold,
Flouting the rite with a perjured vow,
Shall not the new take the place of the old;
The sun of the *then* quit the ice of the *now*?

Ah! did he love her? He said so, in sooth;
And she made him say it in mazed surprise:
He swore to his honour to make it truth;
And his true heart clave to her heart of lies.

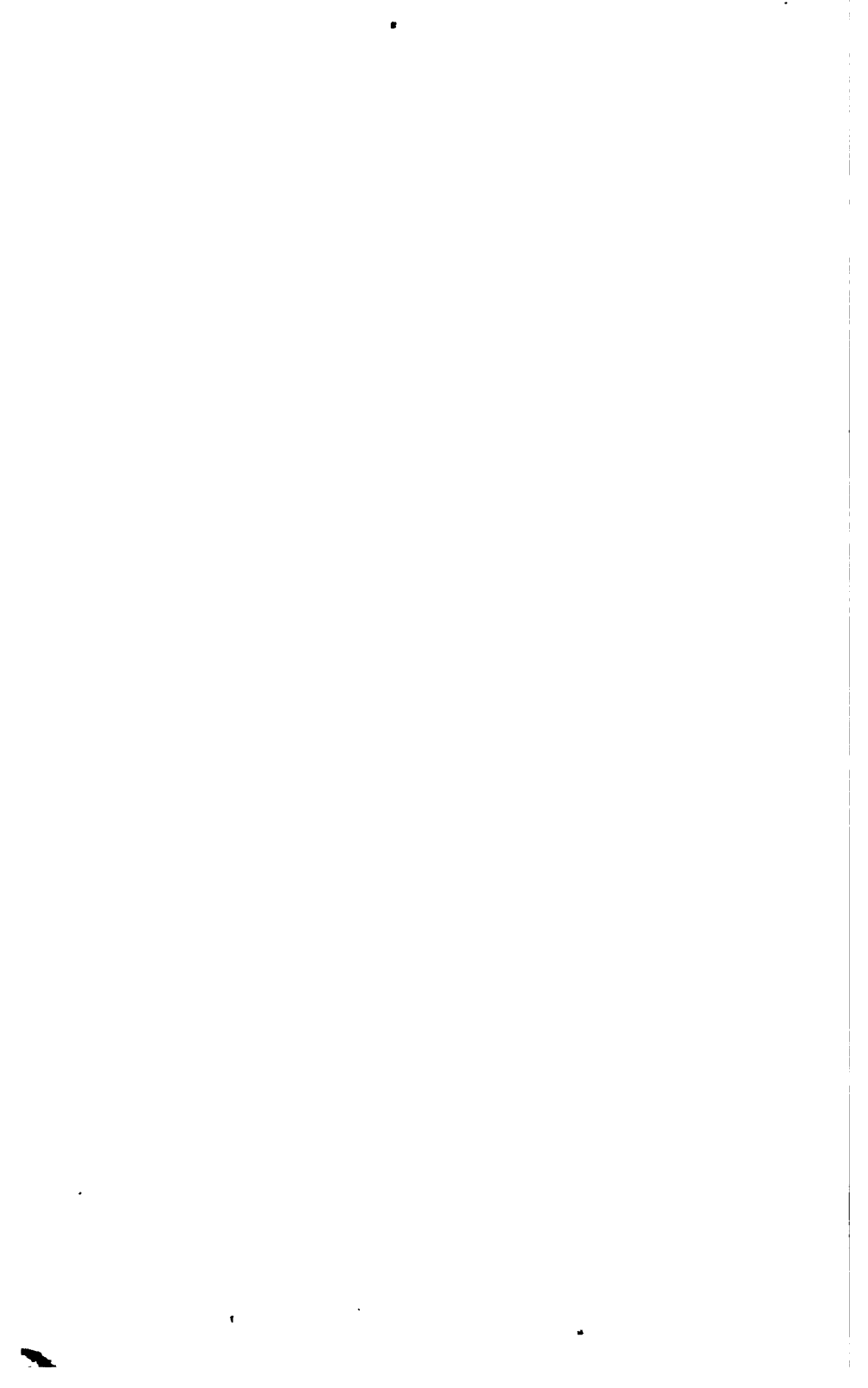
Was there no churl of her own degree,
No upstart churl with new acres broad,
To come at her call and her slave to be,
Till land married land in the fane of God?



From the Painting by Frank Wyburd.]

OLD LETTERS!

[See the Poem.



Such were in plenty, for she had gold—
 Such is the man she will wed to-morrow;
 But she had a fancy that wealth untold,
 That fathomless mine, a heart, to borrow.

To borrow, to borrow, but not to keep—
 That were to hold it all too dear;
 For practice, her hands its strings should sweep,
 Her ears the full tones of its music hear.

Resolved, for a season she turned away
 From senseless clowns with new acres broad;
 Giving the poor and the proud *his* day,
 Whose wealth was his brain and trust in God.

She made up her eyes to the depth of pools
 Of love in the midst of her beauty's glare :—
 Fledged with new honours, flushed from the schools,
 How should a young man know to beware?

Ah! did he love her? He said so, in sooth;
 And she trapped him to say it in mazed surprise:
 He said it, and swore to make it truth;
 And his true heart clave to her heart of lies.

Will she break it now—the heart she trepanned?
 May Heaven forefend! though a spell she throw
 Round it of ice, pray a magic hand
 May touch it and bid its streams reflow!

If she to-morrow will wed for gold,
 Flouting the rite with a perjured vow,
 Should not the new take the place of the old?
 Where are her thoughts and her fancies now?

Thrice hath the letter she holds been read—
 Hath she been snared in her own device?
 Why linger now o'er the hopes that are dead?
 Let them be tombed with her artifice.

Ah! Memory whispers her hopes and fears,
 Her anguish of doubt, till that letter came;
 How the writer professed to her bliss and tears
 She had lit once, for ever, a vestal flame.

The spectacled Prudence, ner mother, is kind;
 Patient and kind to the griefs of youth;
 She will wink at a heart-throb or pang till she's blind,
 So her child be but true to her untruth!

Culled from the rubbish doomed to be burned,
 Of scandal, of fashion, of fête and fair;
 Alas! is his love, with his letters, *returned*,
 Coiled round a lock of her worthless hair?

He recks not. Why should he? Both to the fire!
 Of her future this prayer the grace shall be:
 'God send my sons, be not like their sire!
 God send my daughters be not like me!'

A. H. G.

RESERVED MEN.

THERE is no quality of mind more disputed about than reserve. Some praise it; and others condemn it. But that is mainly because the disputants do not start from the same point. They have not first agreed upon its definition.

In its primary sense it is something which is kept back for a time of need, like a part of an army for some special emergency. When used to denote a mental quality it indicates something concealed in the mind, and hence modesty or caution in personal behaviour.

When used disparagingly it expresses closeness, the direct opposite of frankness and openness, which have an especial charm, and win favour easily.

It has its counterfeits, like all other good qualities; and where it is excessive it provokes dislike.

In its good sense it is an element of great strength of character; and for this reason, that it leads a man to pause before he acts, and to reflect before he speaks; that it secures to him the opportunity for self-defence, as well as leisure for employing his own resources.

It is impossible for any one to rule well who has not a certain amount of reserve. A king, a statesman, and a general must know how to keep their own counsel, else the one will lose his influence, and, perhaps, risk his crown; the other be outwitted; and the third lose the victory. None of them can afford to admit the many within the circle of their own secret thoughts and purposes. The ultimate end of each must be kept out of sight. There is a security in that atmosphere of mystery which more or less surrounds every reserved man.

It is a trite saying that no man is a hero to his *valet de chambre*. The meaning of this is, that, speaking generally, the closer we come to people the less we admire them; that we lose *prestige* in the same proportion that the wall of reserve is broken down which should exist

between man and man; for it is the tendency of intimacy to dispel whatever illusions we may have indulged respecting any individual, partly because our ideal is too high, and partly because nothing human is perfect. The old proverb that 'familiarity breeds contempt' points in the same direction.

If we seek for an instance of reserve, we need only cast our eyes across the Channel, where we shall find one as remarkable for its intensity as for its success. It is impossible not to be struck with the power of reserve in the hands of the present ruler of a warlike and capricious people. It is perhaps the most striking feature in that character, and it renders him peculiarly fit to rule over that gay, light-hearted, impulsive, and uncertain race. The public knows nothing of his plans till the word of command is given, and the sword is drawn from the scabbard. And hence a kind of awe surrounds his presence. Men scarcely know what to think or do. They may be on the very verge of events which his will is bringing about, and his eye only foresees. They may be on a mine to which his hand alone conveys the torch, and an instinct is abroad that all are in the dark as to the purpose of that man of reserve who holds in his hands, to a great extent, the destinies of Europe. It is impossible not to see this, whether we recall the few words spoken to an Austrian ambassador, which were the prelude to a fatal war, for which every preparation was afterwards found to have been secretly made; or whether we call to mind the memorable *coup d'état* by which he secured the throne; or consider the life-long habit of reserve which this remarkable man acquired in adversity, when he, in very deed and truth, laid by knowledge, experience, and judgment against the day of need, storing up the lessons he had so painfully learned, and keeping secret within himself the conclusions to which he had been led. Divest him of his reserve, and he will be-

come comparatively weak and powerless.

But—descending to a lower level—if we go into any of our public schools, we shall see how some boys are protected by their very reserve from dangers into which their more frank and open companions too easily fall. You cannot tell why, but they seem to live and move within a charmed circle. Respect is paid them almost involuntarily, and as a matter of course. No liberties are taken with them. Their reserve is a shield and defence to them. Pass over a few years, and see the same boys at the universities. Again it is the same story. Older in years, their character has acquired strength, and the secret of that strength was reserve; and, as years pass on, and these youths, having ripened into manhood, are found in the councils of the nation, the testimony of other men bears witness that they are to be relied on, and may not be trifled with; that there is a depth and an earnestness about them, a dependableness which, if combined with great intellectual gifts, insures success, and which, even if unsupported by any extraordinary talent, yet always realizes its value where caution and prudence are in demand, and but rarely found.

The reserved man is hardly ever off his guard. He is never the sport of those who play upon the frank and open-hearted. He can keep his own counsel, and bide his time, and set a watch upon his lips, and master his countenance.

But there is another side of the question. The medal has its reverse. When we speak of reserve as being a tower of strength, we refer more to the life of public men—to the part which each man has to play in the world. If a man would shine as a statesman or a diplomatist, as a barrister or a military man, he must practise reserve in all his dealings with the public. This is essential to his success. He will never be great without it. But there is something more valuable than even a great name. The friendship of a true friend is worth it all, and this is seldom gained by reserve.

VOL. VI.—NO. XXXVII.

It is necessary to friendship that men should be, mutually, well disposed to give and take.

If the giving is all on one side, and the taking on the other, the growth of friendship will be stunted; it will dwindle away. We are not by any means saying that it is necessary that friends should resemble each other in character. On the contrary, we believe it to be better, and more conducive to lasting friendship that there should be some dissimilarity—sufficient to give it raciness and to prevent insipidity. But we maintain it to be necessary to its existence that a man should feel that while he gives confidence he also receives it.

Reserve interferes with this exchange; and hence we see men who succeed wonderfully well in the line of their ambition, but who live and die without friends. While reserve is of inestimable service to a man in his public life, it is injurious to him socially. It keeps men at a distance from him; oftentimes repelling even those who have a legitimate right of access to him; and the very point which is its recommendation in one case becomes a hindrance in the other.

Again and again have we seen it happen that the most careful endeavours to make and cement a friendship have come to nothing without any apparent cause. Perhaps some peculiarity of manner, something in the circumstances of meeting, some intonation of voice, or wish expressed by some mutual friend whose opinion we value, has led us to desire that an acquaintance which we have formed should ripen into friendship. We adopt every means to bring this about, and believing it worth an effort, we do not allow ourselves to be repelled by any apparent coldness which may be, after all, only an attitude of manner, or our own fancy. We are not at first met half way but we hail the earliest indication of reciprocity, the first symptom of a thaw; and as time goes on, we think we have gained a friend, all the more valuable because of the difficulty in acquiring it. And so we go on perhaps for years, till

some circumstance or event takes place which reveals to us the fact that all our trust has been but the 'baseless fabric of a dream.' We find that, while we have been free and generous in our confidence, there has been no corresponding generosity. We have had to do with a niggard. The shell of his reserve could not be broken through, and we discover that we have known no more of our friend's mind and purpose than the world at large; that he has not given us his confidence till it has been, in a manner, wrested from him by the force of circumstances. We find that we have been all along investing our friend with qualities which he did not possess. We have pictured him as we hoped to find him, and not as he really is—reserved, incapable of true and generous friendship.

There are few who have not found their hands thus pierced by the reed on which they have leaned. Foolish so to lean you will perhaps say. But we deny it to be so. If it is better to trust and be deceived than to lose the 'bless of believing,' as Mrs. Butler so well expresses it, so is it better to fail in gaining a friend, than to be so wary, so cautious, so cold, as to shrink from making ventures to win one.

The reserve that stands in the way of making friends is hateful. It prevents a man from ever getting outside himself. He may have admirers if he is clever, and toadies if he is powerful and rich; but if he cannot, for a time, turn his back upon himself, open the sluices of his own heart, and lose himself and his interest, his hopes and his fears, his joys and his sorrows generously in his friend's, he is not really 'worth his salt.'

It has been well said that there is a greater grace in receiving favours well than in conferring them. But the reserved man cannot receive them well. He cannot unbend himself to do so, and while he may, perhaps, expect homage and respect, he is himself undemonstrative. In fact, we generally find a man to be *exigant* in his demands upon our attention in proportion to his own undemonstrativeness to others.

When reserve is carried on into domestic life, it is of course a far worse and greater evil. A man may say that he is not bound to make friendships—no duty or obligation of any kind calls upon him to do so, and even prudence may forbid it, on the ground that so many have suffered through their friends. But no such plea can be urged where a man has the ties of home. If he has a wife and children, and shuts them out from all his interests and cares—lives his life apart from them, and allows them no share in his hopes and ambitions—can he justify himself? Yet have we not known those who have been strangers in their own home? Can we not recall any instance, within our own knowledge, of a young wife, in all the glow of her early love, gradually awakening to the fact that she is no helpmate; that she is but a toy, a bright jewel, perhaps an ornament in the house; but not a companion, not a sharer of her husband's trials, not a partner in his schemes and hopes? She entered his new home full of joyful visions of usefulness; but on the very threshold the veil was torn from her eyes, and she found that she was doomed to live a lonely life, to be a widowed wife because, in an evil hour, she had chosen for her husband a man of reserve.

As with the wife so with the children. They grow up under their father's roof, but have no knowledge of him. His eye and voice have no attraction for them, for they do not betray any tenderness towards them. Hours grow into days, and weeks, and months, and years without their ever being drawn more closely together. In their infancy and youth they were not encouraged to come to him with their griefs and joys, and so in later years they come not for counsel and support under graver difficulties.

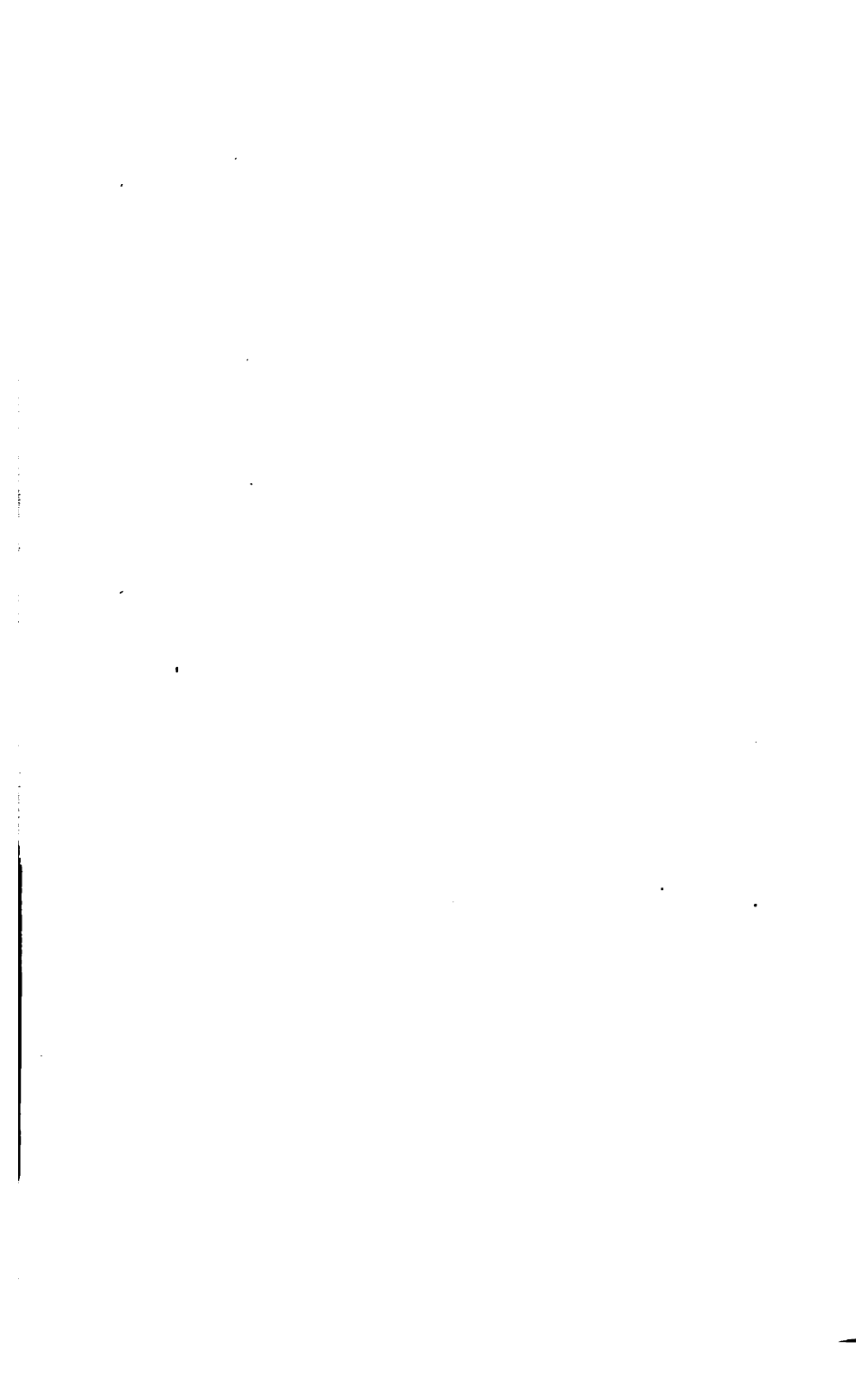
It may be said that reserve is natural to some persons, and that it is therefore harsh to condemn it; but we are not saying what is its cause, nor whether it is acquired or otherwise. We are simply speaking of it in its results and effects. Nature may have endowed us with



From the Painting by H. Schlessinger.

REVERIE.

[See the Poem.





many peculiarities which are not desirable, and which it is the business of life to tone down, to counter-act, or uproot.

It must not, however, be supposed that every man who has the credit of being reserved is really so. There have been instances of men who have passed through life with that reputation but who have no real claim to it. Reserve generally belongs to characters of some depth, and has no fellowship with shallowness and superficialness. It may frequently happen that we do not get beyond the surface with some people, but that may be easily accounted for by the fact that there is nothing below the surface.

To be able to feel and to express

sympathy is a faculty which seldom accompanies reserve. Yet it is the food which nourishes friendship. It is impossible to go on for ever taking it upon trust without at least some occasional indications of the existence expressed by word or deed, for there is much truth in the old saying 'si vis me flere dolendum est.' We cannot hope to move others to tears unless we too weep. It is one of the laws of our being. The dull, cold, impassive manner suggestive of like faculties of heart can never kindle a fire in others. We must weep with those that weep, and laugh with those that rejoice, if we would brighten with our sympathy the chequered life of those among whom we live.

REVERIE.

'TIS a sweet secluded way
Midst sunbeams, shadows, and flowers,
There is peace in the winds that hitherward stray,
Diffusing their fragrant showers.

Not even the startled hare
Dashes swift through the dark-green grove,
A spirit reigns in the charmed air—
Is it sorrow, or hope, or love?

Who stands by the clustering vine?
More fair than all flowers is she—
A mortal form, with a face divine,
And a child's simplicity.

Weary of fashion and talk,
And the trifler's commonplace smile,
She has left them all in the crowded walk,
To speak with herself awhile.

Her lips may utter no word,
Yet, her spirit speaks through her eyes,
And an angel writes the record,
While she looks on the boundless skies.

' O passionate heart of mine,
Is this thy perfect estate;
Have thy spring-time hopes here reached their prime,
Is there naught more solid or great?

' Have I tasted the purest joy,
Or must I evermore pine
To find in the noblest no alloy,
In the search no folly of mine?

'Twere sweet to be call'd fair,
 If it left not a restless mind;
 I long to grasp what I yet might share
 Of a better and lovelier kind.
 'Tears force a way to my eyes,
 For I know not whom to trust?
 And a woman's tenderest sympathies,
 Like leaves, may be trampled in dust.
 'O, is it not sad to stand
 In a world so mark'd with power,
 O'ershadow'd by God's irresistible hand,
 As weak as a summer flower?
 'Love can scarcely cost me a sigh—
 Love with its silly parade,
 Its boasted golden power to buy
 The blush of a modest maid.
 'Life is more than a selfish rest,
 Our pity should crush our pride;
 These hands are ready to work their best
 If a master-mind would guide.
 'My bosom is not all steel,
 It is tender enough when found;
 I can feel for those that feel,
 And would bind up some inward wound.
 'I hardly can grope a way
 To life's brighter, happier part;
 O that some angel now would say
 Where I may trust this heart!
 'Till I see e'en a shadowy way
 To that land where the young find rest;
 If not to enter at once and stay,
 Yet, to feel its light in my breast.'

ANSWER TO THE SULTAN'S CHOICE.

An Anagram.

[The initial letters of the lines form the answer.]

Perfection found at last!
 Even a sultan's gold
 Vainly expended fast,
 Ensur'd that *he* was *sold*.—
 Reckon'd he that his choice
 In all things *perfect* was?
 Look'd he to the face and voice
 Or figure alone?—because
 Figure and voice and face
 Train'd up, without a mind—
 Heartless—is void of grace—
 Even so he'll surely find.
 Probably he but sought
 Enticement for the eye,
 A beauty thus he bought
 Killing her by-and-by.

ACROSTIC.

THE MODEL'S STORY.

I DON'T know what it was that first induced me to become a painter. Every one was against it. My father thought it was madness. My mother said she was dreadfully disappointed at my foolish choice. My sisters wondered that I did not prefer the army, the bar, a public office, *anything*, rather than such a profession. As for Dr. Dactyl (then head-master of Muzzington School, where I was pursuing my curriculum), he privately informed me in his library that any young man who would wilfully abandon the study of the classic authors at my age, and thus forego the inestimable advantages of a university career, must be in a bad way.

The truth is, the doctor and I had not been on the best of terms. Long before I began to draw in an orthodox way from the 'antique,' at Mr. Mastic's atelier in Berners Street, I had had an idle knack of scribbling; and, in my school hours, this youthful taste frequently developed itself in the form of caricature. I believe I might have filled a portfolio with sketches of my schoolfellows. Podgkins, the stout boy, in his short trousers; Dull-away, the tall dunce in the fourth form, who was always blubbing over his syntax; Mother Banbury, who came to us regularly on Wednesdays and Saturdays with a tremendous basket of pastry, and with whom we used to run up a monthly 'tick';—all these characters, I recollect, were depicted with great fidelity on the fly-leaves of my *Gradus* and *Lexicon*. Nor did the doctor himself escape. His portly form, clothed in the picturesque costume of trencher-cap and flowing robe, was too magnificent a subject to forego; and many were the sheets of theme-paper which I devoted to this purpose. One unlucky cartoon which I had imprudently left about somewhere, found its way into the doctor's awful desk, where it was recognized weeks afterwards by Simkins, a third-form boy, who had been sent to fetch the birch from that awful repository;

and whose information to me fully explained how it came to pass that I had lost at one and the same time my favourite sketch and the doctor's affections.

I need scarcely say that I made no endeavour to reclaim this lost property when I took my final *congé*. The doctor gave me a cold and flabby hand—remarked, with peculiar emphasis, that if I persisted in my wish to become an artist, he only hoped I should devote my energies *in the right direction*, and not degrade my pencil by—. I guessed pretty well what he was going to say; but as we saw the Muzzington coach draw up at that moment outside his study window, he was obliged to stop short in his lecture. I had just time to get my traps together, to give the doctor's niece, Mary Wyllford (a dear little soul of fourteen, who had brought me a paper of sandwiches), a parting salute behind the dining-room door, shake hands with my schoolfellows all round, jump on the 'Tantivy' coach beside the driver, and roll out of the town.

Of all the various fingerposts which Time sets up along the road of life, there are few, I think, which we remember better than that one we leave behind us on the last day at school. The long anticipated emancipation from a discipline which in our youthful dreams we think can never be surpassed for strictness afterwards—that rose-coloured delusion which leads us to look forward to the rest of life as one great holiday; are not these associated for ever with the final 'breaking-up?' What student of the Latin grammar ever drew a moral from his lessons?

'O fortunatos nimium sua ai boni norint.'

There is the text staring him in the face, and yet he refuses to listen to it. The golden age, in his opinion, has begun, instead of ended. All care, he thinks, is thrown aside with that old volume of Euripides. At last he is to join a world in which the paradigms of

Greek verbs are not important; where no one will question him about the nature of Agrarian laws. Ah, *gaudeamus igitur!* Have we not all experienced this pleasure?

I had purchased some cigars at Mr. Blowing's, in the High Street (his best medium flavoured, at five-pence apiece), with the audacious notion of lighting one up at the school door; but when the time arrived, I confess my courage failed me. I waited until we were clear of the town to produce my cigar-case, and presently had the mortification of turning very pale before the coachman.

A month or so after that eventful day, I was established as an art student in Berners Street, London. I had a hundred a year, which, my father assured me, was an ample allowance, to live upon, and the entrée to Mr. Mastic's academy, hard by. The expenses of my tuition at that establishment were defrayed out of the parental purse; and when I state that fifteen shillings a month was the sum charged for admission, it will be observed that the outset of my career was not attended by much investment of capital. Mr. Mastic had formed a fine collection of casts from the antique, which were ranged around his gallery for the benefit of his pupils. There was the Fighting Gladiator stretching his brawny limbs half across the room; and the Discobolus, with something like the end of an oyster-barrel balanced in one hand; and the Apollo, a very elegant young man in a cloak, who was supposed just to have shot at some one with an invisible bow and arrow, and seemed very much surprised at the result; and the Medici Venus, whom one of our fellows always would call the *medical* Venus, on account of its frequent appearance on a small scale in the chemists' shops, bedecked with galvanic chains and elastic bandages for feeble joints and varicose veins. And there was the Venus of Milo, whose clothes seemed falling off for want of arms to hold them up; and chaste Diana, striding along by the side of her fawn; and Eve, contemplating

herself in an imaginary fountain, or examining the apple in a graceful attitude. With all these ladies and gentlemen in due time I made acquaintance, learned to admire their exquisite proportions, and derive from them and the study of Mr. Mastic's diagrams that knowledge of artistic anatomy which I have since found so eminently useful to me in my professional career.

Rumour asserts that Mastic had himself dissected for years at Guy's Hospital, and had thus acquired great proficiency in this branch of his art; which, indeed, he seemed to value beyond all others. He knew the names of all the muscles by heart, their attachments, origin, insertion—what not? Frequently I have known the honest fellow remove his cravat to show us the action of the sterno-cleido-mastoid; and he was never so happy as when he was demonstrating, as he called it, in some fashion, the wondrous beauties of the human form. Mastic never exhibited his pictures. The rejection of some of his early works by the Royal Academy had inflicted a deep wound upon the painter's sensibilities, which time could never heal. He talked with bitter scorn of the establishment in Trafalgar Square; hung the walls of his atelier with acres of canvas, and was often heard to remark that if the public wanted to see what he could do, they might come there and judge of his merits. I regret to add that few availed themselves of this golden opportunity. It might be that his art was of too lofty a character to suit the age; or, perhaps—as neglected genius is wont to do—he slightly overrated his own abilities. Certain it is, that as year after year he devoted his talents to the illustration of history, or the realization of the poet's dreams, these efforts of his brush, whether in the field of fact or fiction, remained unheeded in his studio, lost to all eyes except our own; and even we, his faithful pupils, did not perhaps appreciate them to the extent which they deserved. As we profited by his experience, we improved our judgment, and by-and-by began to find faults where we had once seen

nothing but perfection. I became a student of the Royal Academy, was admitted to paint in the 'Life School,' and soon grew ambitious enough to treat subjects of my own. The Preraphaelite school had just arisen. Men were beginning to feel that modern art had too long been looked upon as an end rather than a means, and preferred returning to an earlier and less sophisticated style of painting. They said, let us have truth first, and beauty afterwards if we can get it, but truth at any rate. And the young disciples in this new doctrine of aesthetics suffered endless ignominy and bitter sneers from old professors and fellow-students; but they did not care. They went on in the road they had chosen—painting life as they saw it. They represented humanity in the forms of men and women, and did not attempt to idealize it into a bad imitation of the Greek notion of gods and goddesses. When they sat down before a landscape, their first object was to copy nature honestly, without remodelling her form and colour to suit a 'composition.' And, as time went on, they had their reward. Yes; *magna est veritas et prevalebit*. At last their labours were appreciated; and I am proud to think that my first efforts were stimulated by the example of such men as Millais and Holman Hunt.

My father's allowance to me was, as I have said, only a hundred a year; and I soon began to feel the necessity of earning money. To a young artist without patronage that is perhaps an easier matter in these days than it was some forty or fifty years ago. Unless a man was 'taken up,' as the phrase went, by some wealthy patron—a Sir George Beaumont or a Duke of Devonshire—he could not then hope to make a living by his profession at its outset. But in these days of cheap illustrated literature, fair average ability may often find a field for work in drawing on the wood. I was lucky enough to become connected with a popular periodical, and managed to eke out my income by using my pencil in its service.

There is something very delight-

ful in handling the first money that one has earned. To know that you are under no obligation for it, that it is yours by the strictest law of justice, that you have actually turned your brains or fingers to some account at last; that your service in the world is acknowledged substantially in those few glittering coins or that crisp, pleasant-looking slip of paper; there is a charm, I say, about the first fee or honorarium which we never experience again. Hundreds may be paid into our bankers when we are famous. Our great-aunts may shuffle off this mortal coil, and leave us untold treasures in the Three per Cents; but we shall never look upon a guinea or a five-pound note with the same degree of interest which we felt in pocketing the price of our earliest labour.

I took care not to let this employment interfere with my ordinary studies. My object was to be a painter, not a draughtsman; and it was perhaps fortunate that I did not get more magazine work than sufficed to keep me out of want, just then, or I might have neglected my palette altogether.

One of the earliest commissions which I obtained was through the influence of a little lady whose name I have already mentioned—Mary Wyllford. Within two years after I had left the doctor's establishment he had received a colonial appointment; and when he left his native country, deeply beloved and regretted by his old pupils (whose pious tribute to his worth finally took the form of a silver inkstand), Mary came up to town to live with her mother, a young and still handsome widow of eight-and-thirty, who had just returned from the Continent. I had often felt some surprise that Mrs. Wyllford should have voluntarily separated herself for so long a time from her child; but Mary now made no secret of the fact that her mother had been in very poor circumstances, and that, as her uncle the doctor had kindly offered to take charge of her, Mrs. Wyllford, unwilling to become a further burden on her brother-in-law, had accepted the situation of companion

to a lady who was travelling abroad. The unexpected death, however, of a distant relative, had not only placed them henceforth beyond the reach of want, but actually would insure for Miss Mary a very pretty little fortune by the time she came of age.

The first thing the good little girl did after they had settled in their new house, was to persuade her mother, whom I found to be a very agreeable and accomplished woman, to let me paint her portrait. I have studied many heads since Mrs. Wyllford sat to me, but never remember one with which I was more impressed at first sight. Hers was a beauty of which it might truly be said that it improved with age. Just as the first autumnal tints only enhance the charms of what was last month's summer landscape, so some faces, I think, become more interesting in middle life than in the fullest bloom of youth. There was sometimes a sweet sad smile on Mrs. Wyllford's features, which told of patient suffering and unwearying love through many a year of trial. I did not know her history then, but had heard that she had married as a schoolgirl, and that the union had been an unhappy one. Mary never mentioned her father's name to me, and I took care to avoid a subject which I knew would be painful to her. She had now grown up a fine, fair-haired, rosy-cheeked girl of seventeen, and, after the renewal of our acquaintance, I confess that the boyish affection which I felt for her at school soon ripened into a stronger passion. In short, I fell in love with her, and, in the language of diffident suitors of the last century, had reason to hope that I was not altogether despised. But how could I, a young tyro, just entering on my profession, without prospect of an inheritance for years to come, how could I venture to make known my case without the possibility of offering her a home? As the little pinafores dependent on the doctor's bounty, she was an object of compassion; but as the heiress of 500*l.* a year, she might marry a man in some position—nay, would probably now have many

such lovers at her feet. I was determined, at all events, to defer saying a word to her on the subject until there was some prospect of my professional success. I was engaged on a picture which it was my wish to send to the ensuing Royal Academy Exhibition. If it were accepted, I thought I might venture to look for further commissions; and the bright hope of Mary's love stimulated me to increased industry.

The subject I had chosen for illustration was the statue scene in the 'Winter's Tale,' at the moment when Leontes stands transfixed before Hermione, hardly daring to recognize her as his living wife. I had had great difficulty in procuring a model for Leontes; but at last succeeded in engaging one through the assistance of a brother-artist, who sent him to me one morning with a letter of recommendation. He was a tall, well-made man, whose age perhaps was under forty—rather too young, in fact, for the character he was to personate, if his hair, which was turning prematurely grey, had not supplied the deficiency. I gathered from my friend's letter that he had seen better days—and, indeed, the moment he entered my studio I was struck by his appearance. His features bore all the evidence of gentle birth; and yet there were marks of want and care upon them which seemed incompatible with their refinement. His manner was particularly quiet and subdued, and, unlike most models whom I had engaged, he seldom spoke, even during the short interval in which he was allowed to rest from what is technically called the 'pose.'

After a few sittings he seemed to gain confidence, and, finding I was interested in him, gave me, one dark November morning, while a dense black fog obscured the light and rendered painting impossible, the following account of his life.

'You are right, sir,' said he, 'in supposing that I was born in a better station of life than this. I've been too proud—perhaps too foolishly proud—to own it to those who have employed me in this way before; but there is something about you

which leads me to trust you with my secret—or, at least, that part of it which I dare to speak of.'

I assured him that I would not betray his confidence, and he went on, his voice trembling as he spoke:

'I was the only son of an officer in the Indian army, who had married late in life, and at the time of my birth was living on half-pay in the west of England. My mother died when I was ten years old; and my father, who indulged me in every way as a child, dreading what he conceived to be the bad influence of a public school, determined to educate me himself at home. The motives which induced him to make this resolution were, no doubt, very good; but experience has since taught me that, in doing so, he made a grievous mistake. A private education may, indeed, answer very well in exceptional cases; but as a rule, and particularly when boys are waywardly inclined, it is the worst of all systems. When I went to College, at the age of nineteen, I had seen nothing of the world. I found myself suddenly emancipated from parental control, in the midst of dangerous pleasures which had all the charm of novelty, and associating with companions whose example no experience had taught me to avoid. Naturally impulsive in my temperament, I was soon led away, step by step, into follies and vices which I had never learnt to see in their proper light. I soon became deeply involved in debt, and, much to my father's disappointment, left Oxford without taking a degree.

'He received me with coldness, and even severity, and told me that if I ever hoped to re-establish myself in his favour, I must speedily reform my habits, and enter at once on the study of the profession which he had chosen for me. It was his wish that I should qualify myself for the bar; and with this end in view, I was placed in a solicitor's office at H—.

'I can conscientiously say that at this period of my life my habits were steady, and that I looked forward with earnestness to taking that position in the world which my

birth and education ought to have given me. I had, moreover, an additional incentive to industry. I became attached to the daughter of a gentleman who had been one of my father's oldest friends. She had been left an orphan, and in charge of the lawyer's family with whom I had become professionally connected. As we were both extremely young, her guardian, although he knew that my affections were returned, would not hear of any formal engagement until I had shown, by an altered course of life, that I deserved her. In due time I came up to London to read law; and had scarcely been called to the bar when my father died. Deeply as I then felt his loss, it is some satisfaction at least for me to think that I was with him in his last moments; that he freely forgave me the pain I had caused him; and—grieved as I am to say it—that he did not survive to see the subsequent misery of which I still seemed doomed to be the author.

'Finding that I was now in the possession of a small inheritance, I determined not to leave H— until I could assure myself of the prospect of a speedy union with her for whose sake I had laboured long and steadily, and without whose gentle influence I felt I might soon relapse into former habits. I had kept my promise. I had relinquished all thoughts of pleasure until I had attained a qualified position; and now I came to claim my reward. Her guardian admitted the justice of my plea; the dear girl herself blushing avowed her affection, and within twelve months after my father's death we were married.

'I found my wife everything that I had pictured her. Kind and gentle as she was lovely, she had ever a sympathising word for me in trouble or anxiety; and though her husband was always her first consideration, she gained the admiration of all our friends by her sweet and winning manner. I look back upon the first few years of our marriage as the happiest in my life. I had already begun to practise at the bar with some prospect of success,

when an unforeseen calamity occurred, which, combined with my own selfish conduct, completely turned the tide of our good fortune.

'It was soon after the birth of our first—our only—child, that my poor wife was seized with a dangerous illness, on recovering from which she was ordered change of air. The waters of a celebrated German spa were mentioned as likely to suit her case; and hoping to compensate by economy for what I might lose in professional practice, I determined to accompany her on the Continent.

'The little watering place to which we had been recommended was by no means expensive. We hired furnished lodgings in a good situation; my wife soon found the benefit of the air, and was on a fair road to recovery, when our baby was also taken ill. To a man who, like myself, has never been accustomed to the society of children, the weary noise and constant crying of infants are extremely irritating, and, having brought an excellent English nurse with us, I soon became glad to escape from a source of annoyance which I could not remove, and which would soon have tried a less nervous man than I then was. Unfortunately the adjoining town—like most German spas—had its kursal, and its gaming-table. At first the beauty of the gardens there, which were laid out with great taste, attracted me. An excellent band played on the grounds; and when my wife was prevented by her domestic duties from accompanying me, I frequently walked there alone, wondering that so many people could bear to throng those close and crowded rooms, when there was so much that was attractive outside.

'One unlucky morning a heavy shower of rain compelled me to take shelter within the building. I walked about from room to room to wile away the time, and at last found myself by the rouge-et-noir table. At first I looked on out of curiosity; and was surprised to find, after all I had heard of the horrors of gambling, that here it was conducted in so quiet and orderly a manner. I

watched the croupiers, now raking in, now doling out the glittering coin. I watched the players, men, women, even children, throwing down their florins with apparently a listless air. I little thought beneath that assumed indifference what aching brows and anxious hearts were there. A little girl of ten had just won a large heap of gold, and ran away with it to her mother, who was knitting on a bench outside. How well I remember her smiling happy face as she poured the money into the woman's lap. . . (Good God! what may that mother have since had to answer for?) . . . I could resist no longer. I flung down a napoleon, and presently doubled my stakes—another, and won again. I left the table richer by some pounds than when I went to it. Would that I had lost every sou in my pocket! I might then have left the rooms forever. As it was, encouraged by success, I went the next day, and the next—sometimes losing, sometimes winning. At last I grew bolder, and played for higher stakes, and then . . . why should I linger over the details of this misery? It is an old story. I went on and on, incurring fearful losses—still hoping to retrench—and rose at length from that accursed board—a beggar.

'If even then I had had the courage to tell my wife everything, to implore her forgiveness, it might not have been too late to retrieve my fortune, or at least have gained our bread in some humble, but honest employment. But I dared not. I have braved since many a danger by sea and land, and faced what seemed to be inevitable death in many shapes, but I could not then endure to meet her calm sweet face—to take our child upon my knee again, and bear the agony that must ensue from such confession. I knew that my wife expected her old guardian and his family to join us the day after my ruin was completed. I knew that at least the little property she would inherit on coming of age would be hers. Little as it was, it might keep them from starvation. Why should I return to a home which I had

blighted, and drag those innocents down into the slough of misery which my own folly had created? I was still young, strong, and healthy, and I determined to seek my fortune alone—to earn subsistence by the sweat of labour. My mind was made up. I wrote a few hurried lines to my wife, and then tore myself away—from her—from my little one, for ever.

* * *

‘My life since that never-to-be-forgotten day has been one of extraordinary vicissitude; my means sometimes rising to the level of a competence, sometimes reducing me to the verge of mendicancy. For years past I have sought my living in different countries, and in various ways, and had nearly realized a little fortune in California, as a gold-digger, when I lost everything on the voyage home by shipwreck. I worked the rest of my passage to England before the mast, and an artist who was on board, knowing my straitened circumstances, gave me his address in London, and has since employed me as a model. This led to other introductions, and among others to yourself, sir. You were good enough to express an interest in me, and I have told you my story; but I beseech you, spare me the sad humiliation which a knowledge of my previous life would surely bring me in the eyes of those from whom at present I must earn my living. I have suffered long and bitterly for the past, though, God knows, not more than I deserve. But I still retain pride enough to beg that you will not inquire my name. Let me be known to you and to your friends as “George,” the artist’s model.

The fog had cleared away at the conclusion of this strange recital, but I had no heart to paint that day. I was almost sorry I had heard poor ‘George’s’ story. I was in no position to help him, and the aspect of his bronzed and weather-beaten face, now rather excited my sympathy as a man than raised my admiration as an artist. It is lucky, thought I, that the head of *Leontes* is nearly finished; this story would have altered its character consider-

ably on my canvas. The man was fit for better things than this—yet how could I help him? I was only just beginning to support myself—and moreover, if I had had the means, I felt sure he would have accepted nothing in the form of charity. Warmly expressing my sympathy, and assuring him that he had not misplaced his confidence, I excused myself from further work that afternoon, determining, in the mean time, to reflect on the best means to adopt for his assistance. He thanked me for what I had said, promised to return on the following day, and went off to fulfil another engagement.

It was only when he had gone that I remembered many questions which I should have liked to ask him respecting the fate of those whom he had so cruelly deserted. And yet if they had been alive—if he had tried, or wished to find them out again—would he not have told me? At one moment I felt ashamed for commiserating a man who had thus selfishly abandoned those who should have been dearest to him (even under the circumstances which he had detailed); at another I realized the bitter trials he had undergone;—thought of the anguish he must have endured, before he could make up his mind to take that fatal step, and felt how heavy had been his punishment.

I determined to consult my good benefactress, Mrs. Wyllford, on the subject. She was coming the next morning with her daughter, to look at my picture. I confess that the prospect of seeing Mary generally put everything else out of my head; but on this occasion I was not sorry, when the time arrived, to find that her mother entered my studio alone. The ‘little housekeeper,’ as she used playfully to call her daughter, had been detained by some domestic matters, and would follow her presently.

I thought I would first show Mrs. Wyllford my picture, and then, while his portrait was before her, detail the outline of poor ‘George’s’ story, and endeavour to enlist her sympathies in his behalf. She sat down before the easel, looking, as I

thought, younger and prettier than she had ever seemed before. The subject I had chosen was familiar to her—indeed she had herself suggested it. Camillo was supposed to be addressing Leontes in the lines—

'My lord, your sorrow was too sore laid on :
Which sixteen winters cannot blow away,
So many summers dry: scarce any joy
Did ever so long live; no sorrow,
But killed itself much sooner.'

She kindly praised the attitude of Hermione, the dresses and accessories of the picture, which I had studied with some care. At last her eye rested on the figure of Leontes. She looked at it long and earnestly,

'I want you to be interested in that head,' I said at length, in joke.

'Why?' said she quickly, and growing, as I thought, rather pale as she spoke. 'Was it studied from nature? I see you have only just finished it: the—the paint is hardly dry, and—would you mind opening the window?—the smell of the oil is a little too strong for me.'

My studio window was one of those old-fashioned lumbering contrivances which swing on a pivot. I went behind the chair to comply with her request, and while engaged in arranging a prop to keep the sash-frame in its place, I began to tell her briefly the story of my model's life. I was interrupted by a loud cry of pain, and turned round to find Mrs. Wyllford falling from her chair. I rushed to her assistance, and found that she had already fainted. There was water in the adjoining room, and I hastened to fetch it. As I hurried back I was met by George, who had just come to keep his appointment, and to whom I hastily explained what had happened. Between us we lifted the poor lady up, and laid her on the sofa. In doing this, her head had fallen on my arm, and it was

not until I raised it, that we saw how deadly pale she was. I poured some water between her lips and begged George to get some doctor's help without delay. But he stood like one transfixed, muttering incoherently.

'For goodness' sake,' I said, 'make haste—no time is to be lost! What is the matter?'

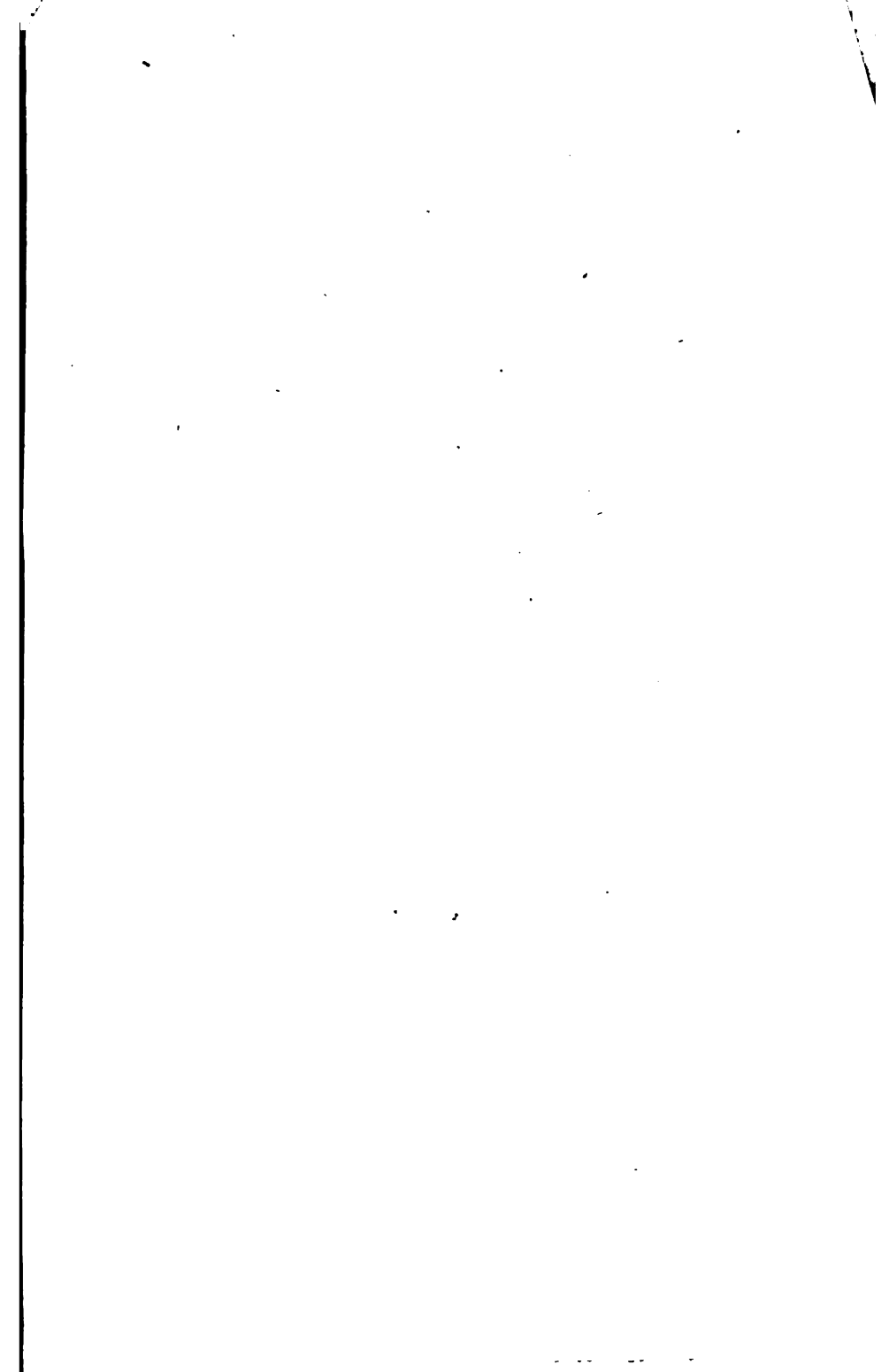
'I think I am going mad,' said he as he fell upon his knees beside the couch. 'Raise her head a little more—this way, boy, *this way*,' he shrieked, in pitiable accents. 'Heavens! how like she is to—Mary—Mary.—O God! *it is my wife herself!*'

* * * *

It was indeed the wife that he had left ten years ago—who had survived his cruel desertion—struggled with poverty and many trials—maintained herself heroically by her own exertions, and was now, thank God! in a position to save him from the misery which his folly and selfishness had occasioned. She had recognised his portrait while I was telling her George Wyllford's story, little thinking how closely it was interwoven with her own; and it was the sudden shock which occasioned her swoon. I have little more to add in explanation. Within twelve months from the date of this event, I married Mary Wyllford. Her father is an altered man. His wife's fortune was an ample one, but he never spent a penny of it without her consent. My picture was accepted at the Royal Academy Exhibition, and, wonderful to relate, was well hung. Since then I have painted from hundreds of men, women, and children; but I can safely say that I never heard from any of my sitters, any narrative which has interested me so much as the Model's Story.

C. L. E.





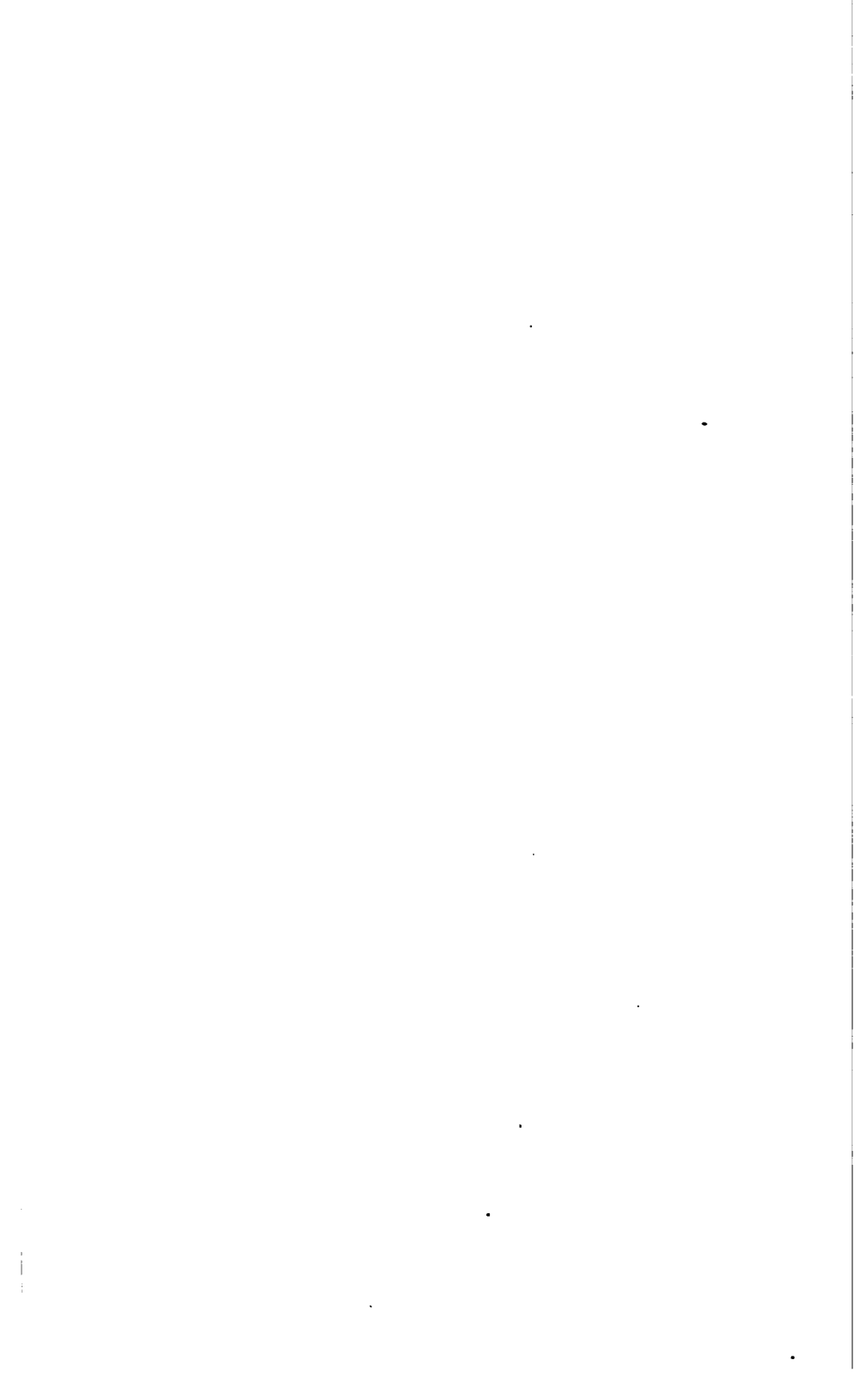




Drawn by Rebecca Solomon.

"At last her eye rested on the figure of Leontes : she looked at it long and earnestly."

[See "The Model's Story."



THE ORDEAL FOR WIVES.

A Story of London Life.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE MORALS OF MAYFAIR.'

CHAPTER XLI.

BY GASLIGHT.

BUT he came to visit her no more. He wrote her a note next morning—which, with all other relics of that time, will, I doubt not, lie upon Esther's breast when she is in her coffin—recapitulating, in a few kind words, the reasons for keeping apart that he had given her the night before; adding, too—was it possible for him to do otherwise?—some expressions of the infinite pain the severance must cost himself. But this was all. He gave no sign of relenting or of change. He came to visit her no more.

She knew then that her dream was definitely over. Of marriage she had long since ceased to think; but love, but tender sympathy, but friendship, but *all* of Paul was riven from her now. She knew this; and she suffered with that triple-fold agony that only very exceptional natures like hers are capable of. She yearned for Paul (does any word but that express the part that the soul plays in human passion?) She brooded over the thought of him day and night and hourly, with a stronger appreciation of his worth and of the fitness there was in herself to be his companion. She sorrowed for him with that purely physical sensation which the great materialist philosopher defined as the irritable condition of certain nerves closely connected alike with the digestive organs and with the brain.

Women of weaker temperament exhaust themselves in one of these forms only—make a religion of their grief, or a sentiment; or, more frequently still, only a source of bodily disease to themselves. Esther Fleming did all three, in her own robust, uncivilized fashion, and (liker to a savage still) she gave no moan under her sufferings. Her

cheeks were white, her sleep no sleep, her meals uneaten; but who was there to notice these things in a person holding such a position as hers? Natty, finding her lessons more negligently attended to, began to have latent suspicions that she had misjudged Miss Fleming; and that, after all, her present governess would turn out just as pleasantly neglectful as all former *bonnes* and nurses had been. Jane, in hourly entanglements of white silk and lace, and hopes of crushing and eclipsing Miss Lynes, would have noticed nothing short of positive illness in anybody unconnected with millinery. And these were the two human souls in London who took the most real interest in Esther Fleming's life.

She felt, at first, that there was a signal injustice in her disappointment making so little change to the world. Every sense and sound of common life jarred on her almost with a rough, actual pain. Miss Dashwood's self-engrossed conversation, the child's merry play, the very sight of the servants at their work, or of the people passing along the streets, was inexpressibly irksome to her.

We would never in youth have the sun to shine upon the faces of our dead. We would have the heartless spirits of the whole world crushed so that they might not mock us in our first, new, overwhelming taste of the reality of sorrow. And the sun shines deep down into the grave where our first-born is to lie before night: and the great world; and, which is bitterer, our own small section of the world gets up, and hopes, and rejoices, just the same upon the day when we learn that we are to stand from henceforth outside all hope and all

rejoicing! Later on in life (when the sun has shone into a great many graves since that little forgotten first one), we turn with a dreary stoicism, or perhaps with truer philosophy, to the thought that others are rejoicing who have once mourned like us; even as we shall one day stand at a marriage-feast while they are occupied in the preparation of their funeral-meats. But Esther was at an age still to hug her grief with passion; to turn from every thought of comfort; to quarrel with the whole universe because it showed no immediate sympathy with Paul and herself.

'You really should try to write in a more lively style,' was Millicent's reply to one of the curt, formal letters she forced herself to write about the house and the servants. 'The doctor says it is very bad for me not to have my spirits constantly amused.'

'I hope you'll get up your colour again soon, Esther,' said Miss Dashwood. 'I have set my heart upon having every one of my bridesmaids handsome, if it's only to make a contrast to Mrs. Peel's.'

'Do play louder, Miss Fleming,' cried Natty. 'I want you to run about on your hands and knees and bark, while I do the man in Punch.'

These are specimens of the kind of sympathy she received.

Sympathy, if she had got it, would have done her no good. Would time? She asked herself this, one gloomy afternoon, as she sat alone, as usual, brooding over her never-dying pain in the silent room where she had heard Paul's voice last. Would time enable her to live down, or live out, her love and her misery together? Ten years hence, when she was thirty, a middle-aged woman, would she come, like Joan, to feel a hard, loveless interest in the common things of life? To rise every morning with no particular hope, and go to rest with no particular disappointment. Oh, if such a time was indeed to come, that she could get over those intermediate years! that she could be old and callous without consciously going through the fearful intervening process of ossification!

She rose, she walked to the window and looked out on the square; dull and dark and silent as it befits a respectable London square to be; and standing there, listening to the patter of the rain upon the pavement, and gazing listlessly at the hurrying forms of the occasional passers-by, a sudden remembrance came across her mind—it was Saturday; a day on which Paul always passed a certain crossing into Oxford street, about two miles distant from the Scotts' house, at five in the afternoon. She knew this fact well; first, from his having explained to her that Saturday was a day on which his visit to her must always be later than usual; secondly, because she had one afternoon chanced to meet him when she was walking along Oxford street, with the child, and he had said, laughingly, 'If ever you want me on a sudden mission of life or death, and it should chance to be Wednesday or Saturday, you would be as certain to meet me at this particular spot at this hour, as you would be of seeing the clock over the post-office, yonder. I have gone this road for more than three years, and never remember being at the crossing more than ten minutes late during that time.'

The remembrance of the fact came suddenly across her mind; and with it a wild, a reasonless impulse to start abroad in the cold and gloom and rain upon the chance of seeing him. Miss Dashwood was out; the child was spending the day with some friends; no one would want her, would miss her, and Paul would be utterly unconscious of her presence. It was scarcely past four now. If she started at once she would be there long before he could by possibility pass; would take shelter in a stationer's shop, which she recollected, and watch him, unseen, as he went by. A dreary comfort, enough; but something—something to stand between her and a certain horrible symptom of whose presence during the last forty-eight hours she had been vaguely conscious in her mind—a dull, leaden incapacity to think or feel or suffer; a loathing of life, an absence of desire even to return to happier things. Better see Paul's

face again, better revivify the old tortures at their worst than give way to *this*.

She dressed herself, forgetful of the rain, in a light cloak and her usual little thin schoolroom dress, and then started, in a bitter cold wind and with the rain driving sheer in her face, upon her errand. When she got to the end of her walk it was still a quarter to five; and as she was ashamed to remain too long with no ostensible object in the shop, she walked up and down until indeed she was thoroughly wet to the skin, for the rain was pouring now, until five minutes to five. Then with that extraordinary sense of guilt of which most of us are susceptible when we are not going to commit anything wrong, she walked into the shop.

The girl behind the counter eyed her sourly as she entered, bringing with her the cold, clinging fog of the street, and desired her, tartly, to observe that there was a stand for umbrellas at the door.

'I am very wet, and I should be glad to have shelter for a few minutes,' Esther stammered, with all the conscious shame of a tongue unversed in artifice. 'And I want a copy-book and some pens, and a bottle of ink—blue ink, if you please.'

Now, the shopwoman knew as well as she knew herself that the girl came into the shop with intentions respecting something or some person unconnected with stationery. Still, a customer is a customer; and London shopkeepers are whole worlds beyond the capacity for curiosity in any matter not directly affecting their own interest. In a country town a woman thus placed must, by a law of her nature, have asked questions: the Londoner, her first disgust at the damp over, just produced the copy-book, pens, and blue ink, and lapsed back into indifference over her embroidery. If the girl had fallen down in a fit, or fallen dead, or stayed five minutes, or an hour, or indeed any time short of the period at which the gas was turned off, she could scarce have brought her mind up to the exertion of thinking of her again.

Five o'clock struck, and then the quarter past five; and then the fog thickened so that it was impossible to discern the features even of the nearest passers-by; and then the sickening thought came upon Esther that Paul must have past without her seeing him, and that all that remained for her was to go home again. She was bodily weak; had scarcely eaten anything all day; and in addition to her disappointment a chill of childish terror overcame her at the thought of having to walk alone through the crowded desolation of the London streets. In all her life she had never so realized that state which the Germans happily term 'God-forsaken' as at this moment. She was too thoroughly beaten for any of the old instincts of pride to come to her help; too bodily miserable, too cold, too wet, too weak, to be conscious of the unreasonableness of her despair. In fact, she had walked a mile or two through the rain to see a certain human face; and had missed seeing it: and now had just to walk home again to a good dinner, and good fire, and every other creature comfort of life. But, in imagination, she had roused herself by strong endeavours into making one more effort at seeing the only thing she desired to live for; and had missed it; and there was nothing more to make her hold on to this wretched mockery of life! And one of the grand characteristics of the disorder of love is that all its greatest tortures, like its greatest enjoyments, are those which the sufferer's own imagination coins. Hence the reason why they are so far worse to bear than those of other passions. For in imagination not the body only, not the mind suffers; but the soul—ourselves! That which one day we can conceive of as enjoying or assuaging in an entirely different state to this unequal partnership in which it is now involved.

Among the beautiful fancies which so many of the old Catholic legends unfold, none is, I think, more beautiful than the well-known image of what shall constitute hell. 'For in this is hell: that, after the dissolution of this earthly body, the soul shall straightway be drawn up-

ward towards God, and shall see Him and feel His presence; and then, when she has tasted to the full the exceeding rapture of love, shall be severed from all love and all light for evermore.'

Of such a hell most of us have had some foretaste through the medium of our earthly desires. Esther Fleming experienced its very dregs of bitterness now, when after the short-lived, pictured rapture of seeing Paul, she had got outside the shop door and stood a second irresolute, with the cold wet wind beating cruelly in her face, before she could summon up courage enough to make her way home along the dark, and by this time crowded, pavement.

'Esther!' said a voice close behind her ear, as she stood there shrinking and irresolute. 'Child! what, in God's name, brings you here at such an hour?'

Had a ray of warm, delicious light direct from heaven, had the ecstasy of gazing upon an angel's face been suddenly vouchsafed to one of the saints of old, some winter's midnight, in his icy, barren cell, it could scarce have flooded his heart with rapture greater than that which smote Miss Fleming's frozen breast as she heard Paul's voice. From darkness to light, from cold to warmth, from absence, from despair to him! It *was* a sudden break from heaven: I used no metaphor. The nearest approach to a foretaste (or a recollection) of another state than any of us can ever know. And in the instinctive bound of all human hearts in moments of intense human passion like this; in the sudden involuntary rush of thankfulness—we know not to whom!—in the realization, for about twenty seconds, of our own capacity for infinite happiness, is an indirect evidence of God and of the godlike within us, which I really think metaphysicians have too much neglected.

Twenty seconds—Esther's beatitude lasted no longer. Then came reality; burning humiliation that Paul should have seen her; burning shame for the words in which, unless she took refuge in direct

falsehood, she must explain being met in such a position.

'I came out too late,' she stammered. 'I wanted a copy-book for Natty, and I took shelter here, and I think it got very suddenly dark to-night.'

He did not reply by one word; but he took her hand, drew it quietly within his arm, and walked on with her down the street. When they had gone about a dozen yards, he led her under a large projecting portico, which at once formed a protection from the weather, and also, owing to the house being empty and the door unlighted, from the observation of the passers-by.

'Esther, are you aware that it is raining hard?'

'Yes, I know it: I shall soon be home.'

'Do you know,' laying his hand upon her shoulder, 'that you are in a poor, wretched little cloak, and that you are wet through?'

'Not—not quite, I think, sir.'

'Do you know,' taking her cold, gloveless hand in both of his, 'that you are chilled to the very bone, and that if you are not laid up with fever to-morrow it will be no fault of yours?'

'I don't think it would matter much if I was; but I shall not be; I'm not going to be ill.'

'Do you know that it is dangerous, that it is wrong, for a girl of your age to wander about alone in the streets of London at such an hour?'

She was silent: but she tried, quite in vain, to take her hand away from him.

'Esther, what did you come out here for to-night?'

No answer.

'Esther, what did you come for? Will you tell me, or will you let me guess?'

She was stonily silent for a minute or two—as was her custom always before the overflow of any strong emotion—then out it came. 'I thought I'd see you once more, and I waited and you didn't pass, and I thought I had missed you, Mr. Chester.' And then a stifled sob.

There was an ominous silence for two or three minutes; after which

an empty cab happened to drive slowly down the street in their direction, and Mr. Chichester hailed it. 'You had better let me see you home,' he remarked, after he had placed Esther inside; 'it is too late for you to go alone.' And as she neither said yes nor no, he got in beside her, and they drove off.

'Poor, little, cold hands!' said Paul; and he took one of them in his again; 'poor, little, kind, patient face, that would brave cold, and rain, and darkness for my sake!'

And he kissed her.

'Esther,' after a minute or two, 'I have told you, cruel times enough, that I can't marry you. I don't repeat it now, because'—and here Paul's own voice faltered—'because, child, now that I see what kind of materials your love and your character are made of, I scarce know what is honour and what is duty for me. But I swear one thing, from this night forth the choice shall rest with you. I'll not leave you again, never fear that! You shall know all my life, and such as it is my life is yours.'

I don't think all men would take this tone at the precise moment when a woman had compromised herself irrevocably for their sake; but you must remember Paul was not a man of the world, and also that there was a decided taint of eccentricity in the Chichester blood.

'The choice mine? Oh, Mr. Chichester! how can that ever be? I know you can't marry me, and I submit to it. All I wish is that we should remain friends, and that when I go back home you should write to me—once or twice in a month, perhaps, at first.'

'Esther,' drawing her closer to his side, 'do you mean what you say? Would a cold compact of friendship really make you happy?'

'I don't think I spoke of happiness at all, Mr. Chichester. I'm not likely to be very happy while I live.'

'Are you not happy now?'

'Sir, I am frightened! I wish I was at home with Jane.'

He let go her hand; he took his arm from round her instantly. 'You will be home with Jane directly, and you will then, at my request,

go straight to your bed, and try to sleep. With a weaker constitution than yours, such an escapade as the one you have thought fit to engage in to-night might cost a brain fever, but I am not afraid of you. Esther,' after a minute, 'do you consider yourself engaged to me?'

'No, Mr. Chichester; I do not, indeed. I know very well that I am not.'

'I'm not certain of it myself; but we shall both be surer on the point in a few days. Miss Fleming, have I ever told you where I live?'

'You have not. You have put me down, consistently, whenever I have even tried remotely to find out.'

'Then I will tell you now. I live in St. John's Wood—Richmond Cottages;—no, you will never remember all that. I'll give you the written address when the cab stops. Will you come and pay me a visit?'

'Yes, sir.'

'That is right. You put on no conventional affectation, because you know I wouldn't ask you to do a thing that would really harm you. Come, let me see; Sunday—Monday—I can manage to be at home all Tuesday afternoon. Come on Tuesday, between three and four in the afternoon.'

'Yes, Mr. Chichester.'

'And prepare, child'—they were within a hundred yards of the Scotts' house, and somehow her hand was in his again—'prepare for a dark story, for I'm going to tell you mine; prepare for a dark household, for I'm going to introduce you to mine, and also, for a moment; he hesitated, fearfully agitated, 'to the companion of my life. Esther, good-night.'

He took a letter, containing his address, from his pocket, and gave it her as they stopped at the Scotts' house: he kissed her cold hands three or four times over, and then they parted without another word.

He loved her; his kisses were warm upon her hands, upon her lips; it was to rest with her to be his wife or not. But as Esther stole up unnoticed to her lonely room, the very chill of death itself seemed to be upon her heart.

She knew that if a renunciation was to come from her lips, she would be inflexible, even though the whole of her happiness should be the sacrifice she must offer up. This morning she could have done it, perhaps, in a different spirit; could have said, even as the Hebrew maiden said of old, 'Do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth.' But the first touch of possession had swept over her love now, and unleavened it for ever of the heroic.

Paul had kissed her!

What was duty, what was heroism, if all that remained to her of life—thirty or forty arid years, perhaps—had to be passed away from Paul?

CHAPTER XLII.

PAUL'S HOME.

The succeeding days passed by in a kind of dull dream, the nights in a state of feverish excitement, wherein real sleep or coherent reasoning waking were alike denied to her; but still Esther Fleming kept as usual to her duties, and was in no danger of brain fever. On Sunday she struggled with the child as usual through the three first questions of the catechism; on Monday she attended Miss Dashwood through one of her daily courses of millinery; on Tuesday—the day that was to be the black or white day of her life—she even forced herself to sit down and write a letter to David. If things ended as—as her own foreboding told her they *must* end, she would not, she thought, be able to write just at first; and so it would be well now, while she could yet measure her strength, to forewarn them of her return.

'I am well in health,' she stated in this letter, which was quite calm and well expressed, and written in her usual hand, 'but I am doubtful if the life here is one I can live long. Remind Joan that she once said she thought I could earn my livelihood, if I chose it, at Countisbury, and beg of her to be prepared at any time for my return home.'

She was calm when she left the

Scotts' house; calm till she began to feel that she must be close to Paul's; then all her courage forsook her, as women's courage does forsake them, in a second, and with the very inconsistency of cowardice, she stopped the cab suddenly, and dismissed it without even asking the driver how far she was still from her destination.

As chance willed, she was already there. She had scarcely walked a dozen hurried steps when the well-known accents of Paul's voice struck on her ear. In another moment her hand was in his, and she was standing, scarce knowing what she did or said in her agitation, at the threshold of his house.

'I thought you would do something of the kind,' he remarked, after hearing her singularly inconsequential reasons for dismissing the cab. 'I felt sure you would either have lost the address altogether, or forgotten the number, or made some other equally trivial mistake; and so, as a kind of forlorn hope, I stationed myself at the gate to look out for you. I hope you admire my flowers, Miss Fleming? This piece of ground between the house and the area rails, which I dare say you country-people would consider too narrow for a garden-path, is what we Londoners are proud to call a garden. Stay a moment, and I believe I can really find you one or two white violets.'

His voice was very quiet,—too quiet to be thoroughly natural; his face pale, and more worn than she had ever seen it, save on that day when she and the Dashwoods had followed him in his walk. Miss Fleming felt that he was striving to rally, not her nerves alone, but his own, before taking her into the house. And feeling this, she did rally—yes, and was able to stand and talk to him for some minutes, almost in her old unconstrained manner, as he gathered her a few spring-flowers and pointed out, but with somewhat forced spirits, the capabilities which a dozen square feet of London earth might, in a master's hands, afford.

'I don't think you have noticed the plate upon my door yet,' he re-

marked, when the conversation had dropped so suddenly and utterly that there was no longer the barest excuse for remaining outside; 'or, if you have noticed it, you are too well-bred to let me be aware that you have done so. Look here, and confess by how much your interest in me has deteriorated!'

This was what the plate bore.

PAUL CHICHESTER,
Teacher of Mathematics.

'Mr. Chichester, nothing could alter me,' said Esther, very low and very hurriedly. 'As far as this goes, I am not even surprised. I've often thought that you knew something, by experience, of the kind of life that mine is destined to be.'

'I don't think you know what that is, Miss Fleming; but come in—come in at once,' he interrupted himself, quickly. 'We are cowards, both of us; but the inevitable moment can't be staved off any longer, try what we will. Come in: I bid you welcome to my house. You are the first visitor that has ever crossed its threshold since I inhabited it.'

He opened the door, drew her hand within his arm, and led her into a small sitting-room on the ground-floor,—his own especial room, as Esther's instinct told her the moment that she entered it.

'You look pale, Miss Fleming. You have not recovered from your exploits on Saturday. Sit in this easy chair—it's my own, and therefore you may rely upon its being comfortable—and wait patiently while I get you a glass of wine. Pardon me, you *must* take it. For the time being, you are in my power, and must do just what I tell you.'

He took both her hands and made her sit down in the place he had offered; then he helped her to take off her cloak and hat; and then he got her a glass of wine—performing all these offices with that kindly little masculine roughness, so infinitely sweeter to women than are the finished graces of men merely accustomed to society, and versed in the minute science of conventional *petits soins*.

Mrs. Strangways had never once made Paul understand that he was

to put on her opera-cloak, unasked, during all the time she had had him for an attendant.

'That's better: there's a tinge of colour in your face now. You look a shade more like the healthy young person who stood beside me that first night on the balcony at Weymouth; a shade less like the ghost that flitted suddenly before me in Oxford Street on Saturday. Esther, do you feel strong?'

'Quite strong, now. I was a little tired till you made me take the wine.'

'You're not in the least nervous? You wouldn't give way at anything you had to hear or see?'

'I would not give way a bit. I never do. I haven't been trained to it. My cousin Joan hates scenes. You need not be afraid of me, Mr. Chichester.'

'That is right. Now, answer me one question. Have you ever heard anything about my family-history?'

'Nothing; except that you have separated yourself from your relations for years. You have told me that yourself, you know; I also heard something about it from my Aunt Thalia, before I ever saw you at Weymouth.'

'Very well. Now I am going, in the fewest possible words, to give you the reason of this estrangement. Among other things you have heard, no doubt, that madness, in one form or another, is supposed to be hereditary in our family?'

'Yes, I have heard it.'

'Esther, when I was a child of seven years old, my father died. Not so much, of course, from what I recollect, as from what I have gained from others, I know now that he was a man averse to worldly pursuits; sedate, studious, ambitionless. He was also poor. As he neither cared for society nor for advancement—as he neglected his rich friends, and spent what money he had upon his poor ones—there was, naturally, reason enough for the world in general to call him eccentric—the family malady developing itself under one of its milder forms. My mother especially—the very weakest of God's creatures I ever knew—failed to discover any

of the noble points in Hildebrand Chichester's character. She came of a commonplace family. She was herself (I speak quite coldly, Esther, I outgrew the whole of my love for her) the very type and essence of commonplace, and all the better parts of her husband's nature were simply a sealed book to her. Like all such minds, she was thoroughly fixed in her opinions. Nothing shook her in any idea she had taken up. She neither retrograded nor progressed. My father was eccentric: she had married into a mad family, and must make the best of it. She spoke frequently of the mysterious dealings of Providence, and of the cross she had to bear; and, I suppose, would have been convinced by nothing short of direct revelation that Hildebrand Chichester was a man of great mental, as well as moral strength, who had had the ill-fortune to ally himself with a woman considerably below the dead level of mediocrity in all things.

'I get warm when I speak of my father; and I began by promising you that I would be brief. I must condense more. When I was seven years old, he died suddenly; and, as his income had been derived nearly exclusively from an annuity, his widow and children were left very badly off indeed. Well, Providence, which had before provided my mother with a poor and eccentric husband, stood her in better stead now. She was still a very beautiful woman—I will show you a likeness of her some day; her weeds and her seclusion were neither of them of very long duration; and just one twelvemonth after my father's death, the Honourable Frederick Carew had seen her face sufficiently often in public places to fall in love with her, and offer to make her his wife.

'Esther, though I tell you I outlived my love for her, some of the old pain overcomes me as I have to speak in direct words of my mother's conduct. But the story can't be told otherwise! I was not her only child. A daughter, several years older than myself, was her first-born;—mark this, her *first-born* child. A creature with a fair face

like her own; but from whose innocent lips neither heartlessness nor injustice could ever come. A creature on whom, in our language, God's hand was heavily laid; but who was yet never to know any of that worse bitterness of life which it is the exclusive prerogative of human thought and human intelligence to feel.' Paul stopped abruptly.

'And this child died, Mr. Chichester?' Esther asked, but with trembling lips, for her heart began to divine a ghastly truth;—'died, and her mother never mourned for her?'

'This child lived. This child lives—I may well say so, for she is, and always will be a child. This child is the companion of my life. Wait, and I will tell you all.

'When my mother entered upon her second engagement, she divined that so heavy a burthen as a helpless, imbecile child would not be an incentive to marriage in the mind of Mr. Carew; divined rightly there, as you will see—and my sister's very existence was studiously ignored before him. I recollect perfectly being trained never to mention Magdalen ('twas my father's favourite name, and he had her called so, little thinking that the hapless child would never know either temptation or repentance while she bore it!)—I recollect being trained never to mention her in Mr. Carew's presence; and I acted my part with the aptitude that I remark most young children show for falsehood, simply as falsehood; and my mother acted hers; and the settlements were drawn out, and the wedding-day was fixed, and they were married!

'I remember that day as clearly as I remember my meeting with you on Saturday. My mother never intended, of course, to attempt to conceal her daughter's existence from Mr. Carew after the marriage. What she wanted was for the marriage to pass over quietly, and then to prepare him by degrees, during their wedding-tour, for the child whom she would have to present to him upon his return. And to carry out this plan she had hired the

small furnished house we lived in for another quarter, and had engaged a woman for the special purpose of taking charge of Magdalen and myself until her return. But the truth was destined to come out somewhat more bluntly than she had calculated on. Mr. Carew was introduced to his step-daughter upon his marriage-day, and through my agency,—thus:

'My mother informed me I was too young to accompany the bridal-party to the church, but promised me that I should appear at the breakfast upon their return—at which honour, I doubt not, I was as proud as children ordinarily are of any opportunity of displaying themselves in new clothes. At all events, I recollect as I stood alone at the dining-room window, waiting for their return, a sudden desire coming across me to exhibit myself in my new finery to Magdalen. I was perfectly aware that, for some cause I did not understand, she was to be kept out of Mr. Carew's sight, and had no intention of disobeying my mother's orders. The gratification of my own vanity was simply what influenced me, and, as this is a passion nearly as strong in some children as in most men, you will understand that I did not reason long, when the intoxicating image of poor Magdalen's surprise had once taken possession of my fancy.

'Esther, the girl was *not* then what in after-years she became. Of sequence, of coherence of ideas she was, I am willing to believe, incapable, although my own recollection don't supply me with evidence on the point. That she was able to join in my play, that she was susceptible of pain and pleasure, I know. I recollect, at this moment, the surprised look of her face when I rushed in upon her in my bridal array, the eagerness with which she fell to examining the different details of my dress—above all, a little knot of white flowers and ribbon, that one of the servants had pinned upon my breast. You know, or you can guess at her love for white flowers (for whom but her should I ever have spent the money that you have known me do?) During the last

few months even that has weakened; but for years the constant possession of fresh white flowers was the solitary desire of her life,—the solitary thing that gave her pleasure. And this has always seemed to me to be connected with some dim recollection of my mother's marriage-day—the *last* day, mind you, on which anything belonging to human affection, or human interest, was her portion.

'If she thought so much of my dress and of one wedding-favour, how must she be impressed by the sight of the grand breakfast-table, and all its profusion of ornaments and flowers, down below? The transition of thought was an easy one; and chance favoured me, by the absence of Magdalen's nurse, in carrying it into execution. You know how time would pass to two young children looking at new and forbidden sweets! Before I thought I had been five minutes in the room, there was a sudden awful sound of footsteps in the passage, a murmur of voices, a rustling of silk, and my mother and her husband stood at the door of the room.

'God forbid that I should attempt, minutely, to describe that scene to you! My mother's weak endeavours to screen herself from the result of her own falsehood, Mr. Carew's coarse rage, the astonishment of the guests, poor Magdalen's stupefied face, as she turned first to one then to another, in the vain endeavour to understand the contention of which she dimly understood herself to be the cause! Every one of these details is imprinted for ever upon my brain, but I need not speak of them to you. The results of that day, the sequel of the story, are all with which I have any concern now.'

"'Let her be taken, let her be taken for ever from my sight!'" These, or words like these, were what Mr. Carew employed, when, his passion having somewhat cooled, my mother was attempting to reason with him. "I'd as soon live in a mad-house myself as have one of these creatures brought under my roof! The young one," turning with a glance to me, "is bad enough, but him I bargained for. Of the other I will know no

more than I did an hour ago. And you, madam," he added to my mother, "will do wisely in furthering my forgetfulness."

'Well, Esther, from that day I saw Magdalen no more. You know what a child's memories are! Upon my mother's return from abroad I went to live at Newton. I had the freedom of a country life, the liberty which is the usual portion of unloved, untended children. At the end of a twelvemonth I had my little brother Oliver. What should I think of Magdalen? I was forbidden to speak of her. In time I remembered her only as I remembered London and my father, and all the other things gone for ever out of my life. The scene upon my mother's marriage-day had not been of a nature to make me wish for any renewal of the subject. I knew that Magdalen, for some reason beyond my grasp, was under a ban, and that only some very slight difference between us—my age, perhaps, or my utter insignificance—prevented me from sharing the same fate.

'I don't want to use any hard words. Mr. Carew and my mother acted, doubtless, according to the light that was in them. He was not the only man in the world who would have repudiated the forced duty of taking under his charge an alien, imbecile child. There have been numberless instances of women feeling not alone want of affection, but actual repugnance for their own offspring. As regards myself, I have no cause of complaint against the Carews. My stepfather looked upon me from first to last with complete aversion; but the old Lord Feltham took somewhat of a liking to me—half, I think, out of spite to my stepfather, whom he despised, and was wont to call half-witted—and on his death-bed made his only son promise to assist my mother in my education and start in the world.

'And this Francis Carew, afterwards the late Lord Feltham, did. He was a man of as small a brain, of views as narrow, as his cousin—looking with the same righteous horror upon the hereditary curse of

the Chichesters, and pronouncing as just the sentence of banishment that had been passed upon my unhappy sister. Personally, too, I believe he disliked me: he had no children of his own, and the subject and the sight of children alike irritated him: but he had a strong idea (much stronger than had my stepfather whose passions were too strong for him to be cautious) of keeping all family disgrace, foremost amongst which he classed poverty, out of sight of the world. His cousin Frederick had been fool enough to marry a widow without money and with children. One of these children, an idiot, they had wisely shut away for life; the other, not an idiot, couldn't be so easily disposed of. Then he must be educated. The future Lord Feltham's brother must be in the position of a gentleman. The boy must be educated: and educated I was. I went to Harrow, I went to college, and on my twentieth birthday was informed by Lord Feltham that he was about to obtain for me a commission in the army.'

'And then you broke with them all, Mr. Chichester? This is the part of the story I have already heard.'

'Then I broke with them, Esther. You are right. Then I broke with them! On my twentieth birthday, after tendering my thanks to Lord Feltham and my stepfather for the assistance they had given my mother in my education, I inquired, in the midst of a full family conclave, for my sister, Magdalen.

'My mother cast her eyes towards heaven and searched for her handkerchief, Lord Feltham and my stepfather put the question curtly aside. So I repeated it. Up to that time I had been treated as a boy, I remarked, on the subject of my sister. Now that I was a boy no longer I wished to hear where she was living, as I intended to go and see her.'

'Do you remember the day I married your mother, sir?' cried out Mr. Carew, whitening with rage. 'Because, if you do, I wonder at your daring to allude to this subject in my presence.'

'I answered that I remembered it

accurately—as indeed I did—and I also added that I felt shame when I counted up the number of years that had since elapsed without Magdalen's face having been seen among us.' Then he added—

'No, Esther. I will not go into it all to you. Why, in truth, should I? I am not seeking to shock you with accounts of the cold inhumanity of those narrow hearts and brains, but simply to show in what especial manner Magdalen came to fall into my hands.

'When our conversation was ended, Lord Feltham gave me my unhappy sister's address, with fullest warning that unless I left my family disgrace to moulder where it was, I was to look for no more assistance from his hands, and that evening I bade my mother farewell and left Newton.

"'You are mad, Paul," were her last words to me. "After all Lord Feltham's kindness and my prayers you are going to turn out just as senseless and headstrong as your poor, dear father. Magdalen is perfectly well cared for where she is. What good can it do either you or herself to disturb her?"

'I replied that I would judge for myself, and I did so. Yes, Esther, I did so! Before noon of the next day I held my sister in my arms.

'But, great God, how changed! My childish remembrance was of a soft-faced, soft-voiced girl, who used to laugh and join with me in my play, and whose vacancy of intellect was at least not glaring enough to show itself to me—I saw a wan, faded woman; with less, far less than a child's intellect, but with an unspeakable, unmistakable look of the pain that ought only to belong to us, who think and know what life is, upon her vacant face. I remembered a girl who used to kiss me and soothe me, in her poor way, in all my childish sorrows; I found a woman in whose bereft heart all capacity for, all knowledge even of human affection, was for ever withered and dead. What she might have been, I can never know. I have refrained long from even speculating on that point. What she was as a child I know, what I found her I

know. And at the time I rested simply upon that knowledge—and acted on it.

'She had lived with the people, an honest enough country labourer and his wife, in whose hands I found her, nearly four years, they informed me. They didn't know her name, nor yet where his lordship had had her kept before. There was no particular change in her state during this time, only perhaps she noticed less. Her health was pretty good, considering she lived quite in two rooms, and never took the air. They weren't accustomed to mad people, and wouldn't be sorry to give her up now that the children were growing older. Lord Feltham had put it in their way because a brother of the man, or of the woman, I forget these kind of details, had been his father's valet.

'You look white, child. The story is a sickening one, but 'tis nearly told. The moment I saw my sister Magdalen's face, my determination was formed. All I had to do was to find out the money obligations under which I stood, as regarded her, to Lord Feltham and Mr. Carew. In answer to my inquiries on the subject I was referred to the family solicitor, and from him I learned that Magdalen Chichester had been supported, strictly, through and upon her own means. With the strange foresight of parental love, my father had appointed in his will that, should my mother marry again, the sum of fifty pounds a year was to be applied under my mother's guardianship, for her use; and in the event of this second marriage, it was further appointed that upon my attaining the age of twenty-one I was to become my "afflicted sister Magdalen's sole guardian for the remainder of her life." The rest of his money, scarcely amounting to a hundred pounds a year more, was left to my mother, and this Mrs. Carew now enjoys, and, I doubt not, will enjoy for another quarter of a century, at least, as pin-money. On her death, I believe, it is to come to me.

'I became her guardian, Esther, as I am now and ever shall be. It was no fine or exalted sentiment whatever that made me act as I did.

Any man possessed of common human passions or human affections must have done the same. Upon one side, the bounty of people whom I despised and the cold-blooded renunciation of one of the nearest and strongest ties of life—upon the other, work and poverty, certainly, but independence, and the power to stand by the poor, bereft being who had no friend on earth but myself. Lad as I was, and accustomed till then to defer wholly to the will and opinion of others, it never even occurred to me to doubt as to what my line of conduct must be. Accident decided by what means my bread and Magdalen's should be earned. The brother of one of my college-friends required a travelling tutor for six months. I accompanied him, leaving Magdalen in good hands during the interval, found that I had somewhat of a speciality for tuition, and on my return—I was just one-and-twenty then—succeeded in obtaining a mathematical mastership to a private school near Kensington.

‘Those were uphill days, Esther, as you may believe. But, although my abilities are not more than those of other men, I had an indomitable determination in me to succeed that would, I believe, have moved mountains. Nothing daunted me; nothing disappointed me; I had Magdalen’s pale face to strengthen me. I had the thought of the Carews to goad me on to fresh endeavours. I have succeeded. During the last six years not one farthing of the interest of my sister’s money has been touched. I have even yearly added something to the capital. If I died to-morrow, Magdalen, with the money sunk as I intend to sink it for her, would have enough to live in the comfort and the care that her state demands, and will demand more every year that she lives. Yes, thank God! I have succeeded. And, looking back to these nine years of work, I don’t think I can say my life—save for her, poor soul—has been an unhappy one. More than this, Esther, these years of work have had the strongest influence for good upon my own mental growth. . . .

‘. . . Why should I turn with

shame from that blot upon my ‘scutcheon, which is in truth no blot. I shouldn’t, child, save for something in your eyes which pleads to me not to speak of it. I am by nature wholly of the temperament of my father and his people—the same capacity for passionate, reasonless emotion, the same innate distaste for action, the same fitful humour, the same tendency to profoundest, moody melancholy. How can I tell what I might have become in the life of mental inactivity which the army would have opened to me? As it is, from the time I was twenty my life has been one of never-ceasing, healthy work. My brain has been habitually submitted to the mechanical processes of reason until I have got to hold it, so to speak, in my own command. We contain, each of us, you know, within ourselves the antagonistic powers which may with special training counterbalance almost any so-called irresistible or hereditary tendency of the bodily organism. So finely balanced is the machine, that a grain may turn it to either side; but I have always maintained, and will always maintain, that as long as disease has not actually changed the structure of the organ and so destroyed the possibility of reasoning, it is in the power of the will to cast that grain. To the man whom birth has placed in that awful border-land between sanity and insanity, and who once becomes a slave to his lower nature, any of the commonest shocks of life, any disappointed hope, any delusion of the senses, may be fatal. The man with the same birthright, but whose brain during the progress from youth to maturity has been made flexible and habitually obedient, to the dictates of the rational will, may suffer—will suffer—more keenly than other men while he lives; but he will not be mad. The entail to the darkest of all human heritages is cut off in him, cut off—I speak it reverently—by his own diligent cultivation of such poor materials as were granted to him.

‘Esther, the story is told. Wait a minute or two, and I will bring Magdalen to see you.’

CHAPTER XLIII.

MAGDALEN.

This, then, was Paul's secret. No ill-assorted marriage, no fidelity to a passion that his heart had long outlived, was the barrier that stood between him and a new love; but simply a very plain, very commonplace duty—the care of a forlorn and imbecile sister, whom not so much an irresistible duty but the wanton neglect of her first natural protector had cast upon his hands.

One of the strange inconsistencies of human nature is its unwillingness to accept any other blow than that particular one for which it stood prepared. For a wholly different, for, in one sense, a far more difficult position than this, Esther Fleming was armed, and would, doubtless, have fought the fight out well. But her heart had contracted with the sharp pangs of cruellest disappointment during all the latter part of Paul's history; and, when he prepared to leave her, no one word, either of surprise or consolation, found its way to her lips.

What, indeed, was she to say? Severed from him by such a rival as she had dreamed of, all the pride, all the nobleness of her heart must have cried out, 'Keep to her. Cherish to the last the life that has been bereft of all else for your sake!' This she knew she could have said; could have thanked him for the confidence he had given her; have promised to remember him with affection while she lived, and then have gone away—gone far away, home to the old house at Countisbury, to drink alone and in silence the dregs of the bitter cup her life had proved to her.

But what was she to say now? Full of youth and the passion of youth, was she to cry, 'For this phantom, for this ghost of a duty that others could fulfil as well, give up your life and all that my love could make your life to you? Love, youth, hope, what are they, compared to the straight and narrow path wherein you have decided it is your duty to keep?' This, of course, was what Paul would expect from her; this, of course, was the renun-

ciation that to a lukewarm love like his would be so simple. For her it was worse than death; it was bitterness that even the last few weeks had not prepared her for. And pride and reason alike told her that she *must* speak thus. He had said that the issue was to be left in her hands. What remained for her than to corroborate the fiat that he himself had already tacitly pronounced, by telling her his history?

No thought of Paul's self-sacrificed life; no thought of all the loveless years of his youth; no respect for the very highest qualities it had ever been given her to know in any man, rose in Esther's mind during these first few minutes. She was capable of it all hereafter; but now she was simply a woman, smarting under the severest stroke a woman's vanity can sustain—the belief, namely, that she has given passionate love in exchange for calm, tempered, reasoning friendship. And so, as she walked to the window, through which the soft sun of the spring afternoon was streaming, and as she smelt the sweetness of the spring flowers from Paul's tiny garden outside, she realised (many human beings, I fancy, have done the same) that love was a madness; that it had brought her no one experience save misery since she had known it; and that she could pray—yes, that she could sincerely pray—God to set her free from it and from all influence of Paul from this very hour.

I don't know whether she actually began the petition or not; for, just as her thoughts reached this point, the door of the sitting-room opened and Paul came in—Paul and his sister.

At the sight of her—at the sight of that poor face, so like Paul's in outline, so removed from his by the whole world of soul and brain—Esther's heart sickened and stood still. A minute before, outraged pride, wounded love, had been paramount in her breast; but at the first sight of her unhappy rival all petty, all selfish feeling was swept away for ever. She stood literally hushed, speechless, motionless, as she gazed on the face of Magdalen

Chichester. Just as one full of life and health might stand hushed, if led abruptly from the outside, noisy world into a silent chamber of death.

Was it not death, indeed? death far more fearful than all mere bodily mortality? There was nothing in the slightest degree repulsive in the appearance of Paul's sister. In repose, and with the expressionless eyes downcast, a sculptor might have taken her chiselled features still as a model for the wan, passive, patient face of some mediæval saint. What chilled you so inexpressibly when you first saw her was the quenched look, the utter want of every human expression, the expression of suffering, even, upon her face. Earlier in life, when the weak brain had possessed somewhat more of vitality, she had possibly been able to suffer more; for hers was conspicuously one of the cases in which, year by year, and while the bodily health may improve, the one ray of intellect seems to flicker more and more feebly. But all that was over now; and severance from Paul would just have cost her no more, not so much perhaps, as severance from her nurse or from her accustomed room. She took her meals; she walked out in the sun; she went to her rest when they bid her; she got up when they bid her; but all passively, without even the slight irritability of temper which, some years before, she had been used to show. Upon all God's earth no being could live in whom not intelligence alone, but all the ordinary physical senses of our nature were more utterly void and blank than in the bereft companion of Paul Chichester's life.

'Give her your flowers,' he whispered, coming closer to Esther. 'A flower is the only thing that will rouse her attention, and even for them, I think, she has well-nigh ceased to care. What! would you draw back?' he added, as Esther faltered visibly. Can there be anything in *her* of which you should stand in dread? Let me have them, then, and I will give them to her.'

'No, Mr. Chichester,' and Esther's voice was perfectly calm; 'I would

rather give her them myself. Will you have my flowers, please? Your brother has just picked them fresh from the garden.' And she walked a step or two forward; she took Paul's flowers from her breast—what right had she to them, to anything of his?—and held them out to his sister.

She just raised her eyes to Esther's face, took the flowers passively, and then stood, as a child stands in the presence of strangers, waiting to be bid to move or to speak.

'Magdalen will go back to Susan,' said Paul, coming back tenderly to her side; 'and Susan will take her out in the sunshine. Will Magdalen give her hand to Miss Fleming?'

She looked at him as she had looked at Esther, without speaking a word; then held out her hand, letting the flowers fall unheeded to the ground as she did so. Esther Fleming took it—took that nerveless, unoffending hand which yet, as she believed, had cut in twain the one golden cord of her life, held it reverently in both of hers, and kissed it.

'And I love you better than I thought I *could* love any woman,' said Paul, when he came back a few minutes later and found her, pride gone, harshness gone, self, altogether, gone, meekly restoring his flowers again to their place. 'Esther, let me kiss you—thus—thus—for that kiss you gave her—the only kiss, God help her! that any lips, save mine, have given her since she was a child. You are worthy of a better fate, my poor Esther; but, as heaven has willed it, so it must be.'

'Paul, you shall never leave her!' but she threw her arms round his neck as she said it. 'I will love you always; but I will never come, by one inch, between you and your duty to her.'

CHAPTER XLIV.

ALONE.

It is not invariably the case that young women in a state of advanced civilization love men more the better

they think of them; rather the reverse, I imagine. But Esther did not belong to a highly-civilized type. The Dashwoods' views of men, and of what men must be, had never really touched her. She held still to a lofty ideal. She believed as rigidly in honesty and truth as she did in the old-fashioned Christian religion that Joan had taught her; and the only times when her love for Paul had been ever shaken was when occasionally somewhat lax notions respecting traditional articles of her faith had fallen from his lips.

But now she saw him, for the first time, as he was. She was brought face to face not with any ideal at all, but with Paul Chichester the living man, and her love was heightened immeasurably. In nineteen cases out of twenty—or probably that estimate is altogether false; in ninety-nine out of a hundred—the hour in which two people in love first see each other in their true character, is the hour in which 'both perceive they have dreamed a dream,' and awake from it. But Esther's imagination—rare accident!—had built up an ideal very near to what Paul really was; and she knew now that her instinct had been correct, that he was cast in that mould wherein the man *must* be cast whom she was to love for life—the most perfectly heroic, the Christian mould, namely. (I endorse nothing, reader; I am but the recorder of my heroine's opinions.) If Paul had at times seemed to waver where she was sure, had not his whole life been an actual working interpretation of her religion—of the highest, of the only true light by which she believed it is given to men to walk? Could there be a more Christian conception of duty than to accept unconditionally such a life as his had been? Could any faith be greater than his belief that his bitter lot had been simply the one best suited to him; not the mere result of blind and cruel chance, but the mysterious workings of a will whose perfect love and wisdom it never even occurred to him to question? Could any virtue be nobler than the life-long fidelity with which he had

stood to his self-imposed yoke—courageous and unshrinking, yet humble as a child as to the merit of his own abnegation?

She had loved Paul long; almost from the first hour she ever saw him. She had loved him passionately, instinctively; with that wild craving of the whole heart and brain which, while it can find no reason to offer for its excess, holds in its own nature the very core and essence of all true love—perfect and unknowing sympathy. But now she found an outward and visible form of the superiority she had hitherto only yearned after, in her idol. She saw him crowned with the fairest ornament, the divinest beauty that can ever encompass a human soul. She saw him suffering, resigned, brave; and from loving, by an easy transition, she fell to worshipping him.

The first grand dogma of all primitive human religion is sacrifice, and Esther was essentially primitive and essentially human. As soon as she worshipped Mr. Chichester she felt (she had not done so before the day she worshipped him, mind), with all the glow of fresh enthusiasm, that her life could no longer be the colourless, loveless life she had pictured, but a life well spent, because utterly sacrificed to her idol.

A letter from David Engleheart the morning after she had been to visit Paul, held out, as it seemed to her, immediate counsel and aid in the position in which she now stood. At another time she must have laughed—have laughed, and then have wept, over the minglement of the grotesque and the really sad in poor David's letter. But with the sublime selfishness of love, all the significance his letter bore for her now was simply in as far as its contents could affect her relations with Paul.

'Come to us any day,' the poor fellow wrote. 'Your little rooin is in order, and only waiting to receive you. And, Esther, don't be surprised, but when you come—if you are not here in the next fortnight—Joan will have married me! When I got your letter, my dear—

you mustn't be offended with me if I was wrong—the thought struck me that you weren't happy in your new life, and I told Joan so, and proposed she should send for you back at once. Well—I could laugh, child, I could put down my pen and laugh, though, God knows! it is no jesting matter — she flew back straight to the old subject (and after dropping it, and almost letting me feel myself quiet and comfortable for weeks past). If you were to come back to Countisbury, your home must be made a permanent home for you; and if Aunt Engleheart died—good Lord! why do I go through all the dreary farce again? We've been asked in church, Esther! been asked in church, and after the third time of asking, I belong to Joan Engleheart, and shall walk to the parish church and be married to her at any moment she chooses. Don't congratulate, or condole, or anything, please, when you write, but just say what day you'll come, and Patty and I will be there to meet you at the bridge. And Esther, my dear, don't pity me, even in your heart. I'd marry fifty Joans to get you to live with me; and considering the poor kind of fellow I am, and all the good she's been to me, and how she looks after my money and everything, I believe I'm making only a right return by taking her for my—no, I mean by letting her take me for her husband. Her plan for you is—I don't like it, though, and don't think it necessary—that you and she together should organize a little day-school for the better kind of children hereabouts. Farmer Villicot would send you five at once, and the promise of a continued supply for another dozen years, and John Williams would send two, and altogether Joan thinks you would start with ten or twelve at least. Heaven knows, a school is sorely wanted for the young savages, but I don't like to think of Esther Fleming engaged on such a task.

But Esther Fleming did like to think of herself as so engaged; and as she walked about and discharged her duties in the days succeeding her visit to Paul, her cheeks were flushed, her step was elastic, her

eyes were full of light. Of course you are right; it wouldn't have lasted; no enthusiasm lasts; but it was quite genuine for the time, and, as must ever be the case with all genuine emotion, Esther believed firmly herself in the eternity of its duration.

'You shall have one week to decide,' were Paul's last words when he had walked home with her on Tuesday. 'For one week I shall neither see you nor write to you; then, this day week, at this hour, I shall come and hear, and abide by your decision. Only, before you give it, I shall tell you honestly whatever effect these intervening days may have worked on myself.'

And, as I have said, during these days she walked erect, and performed her duties bravely, and only cried by nights, and believed quite sincerely that she was strong enough to part from Paul and live all the remainder of her life away from him without a murmur.

'Whatever it may be hereafter (if there is any hereafter), I don't believe in good people being rewarded in this world,' said Miss Dashwood, suddenly, as they were sitting together before the fire on the last night of Esther's probation. 'Out of all the half-dozen people I know intimately, you are, beyond question, the best, and you are ending in grief, and all the rest of us well, or what we are willing to consider as well. Arthur marries Miss Lynes; I, Lord Feltham; Milly has an excellent income, a man she finds it possible to live with, and now this week-old son, whom, no doubt, as being part of herself, she'll love. Even Mrs. Strangways prospers. I heard to-day that her husband has been appointed to an excellent official post in Russia, and that she's going to take all her dear children with her, and devote herself to their education, and think nothing of the world. In other words, if the Russians think her too old to dance, she'll go in for domesticity, flavoured by quiet home flirtations, till the eldest girl is sixteen, and then return to the world, and flirt and manœuvre vicariously. Yes, this is how all we of the world prosper, and you,

Esther, who would outweigh us all put together in the balance of moral good—if such an unpleasant machine existed, which it happily does not—you are going to wear yourself out teaching children in Devonshire, and giving up your life to a man who gives you up for a Quixotic sense of duty. Of a truth, virtue doesn't pay, and I find it better to be vicious!

'I don't think anything pays,' said Miss Fleming, meekly. 'Love certainly does not, and pleasure, you say, does not; of riches I have had no experience. If nothing brings reward in this world, as well try duty, which, at least, may advance us in the next.'

'I like to hear good people say those things,' cried Miss Dashwood, with the hard, short laugh that was daily growing common with her; 'it brings them so completely to our own level after all. Self, self! Self-advancement, in this world or the next, is the one thing we live for, good or bad, fast or slow. Esther,' breaking off, and her voice changing in a second, 'I hope you'll think of me sometimes?'

'I shall think of you, Jane. I shall have little to hinder me from thinking of old friends.'

'I fancy, you know, I should have been different if I'd married Arthur. If ever you marry Paul—don't interrupt me; his sister might die; there's at least a bare possibility of it—if ever you marry Paul, and you find that being the wife of a man one loves passionately is happiness, think of me, Esther, and of what I ought to have been! I shall never be sentimental again like this while I live,' added Miss Dashwood, huskily. 'In speaking this once to you, I'm saying good-bye to all the old life, and to whatever of good there was in me. I shall try not to make Lord Feltham miserable. I shall try to respect him, the more so because you once liked him' (for with rare delicacy, with fine intuitive generosity, Esther had had the courage to tell the whole truth to Jane, and, in telling it, to make Oliver's character shine). 'I shall do my duty, and in time I shall come, no doubt, to take a pleasure

in my diamonds! But, Esther,' she came close, and laid her cold, little hand upon her friend's, 'there was something capable of better things in me. When I laughed at the idea of goodness just now, and called love and goodness as selfish as—doing what I'm going to do! I didn't mean it. Poverty and work, and self-sacrifice and all, Esther, you're better off than I am—Paul loves you!'

* * * *

On the afternoon of the next day, Esther Fleming stood, at the appointed hour, by the window of Mr. Scotts' drawing-room, and waited for Paul Chichester's coming. The smell from the lilacs in the square brought Countisbury vividly before her. She could see herself in the house-place, going through her monotonous daily tasks; could see herself in the long summer evenings, a saddened woman, walking slowly up and down the terrace, where, two years ago, a girl—herself—used to walk with elastic step and a heart full of buoyancy and trust in the future; could imagine how a very few more years would bring her quite close to Joan and David; and how one or two faded letters, and the old Vandyke upon her wall, alone would remind her with a start, at times, that she too had once been young; that hope, that love, had once been in her very hands; and that love and hope had just passed away, silently but irrevocably, out of her life, as her youth had done.

'Esther, you never heard me come up. Miss Dashwood was going out as I reached the house, and gave me leave to enter. Let me look at you, child. So! It is good to see your face again.' And Paul took her in his arms.

For a minute she let him hold her so; for a minute she could not remember one of the sentences—the well-turned, admirable sentences—in which she had resolved to pronounce her own death-warrant. And Paul profited by her silence so far as to hold both her hands in his, and read steadily all the suffering and all the resolve of that downcast, pallid face.

'Esther, let me speak first,' he said,

when his survey was completed. 'It will be best so.'

'No, Mr. Chichester, no,' and she drew her hands away resolutely; 'I don't want strengthening by anything that you can have to say. I have thought it all out; I know exactly what I must do.'

And then she told him, but not at all in well-turned sentences, how she meant to abide by her first resolution, and what her plans were for the remainder of her life.

'And you don't intend to marry me? That seems wholly to have past out of your mind.'

'No, sir, I don't mean to marry you. You know you told me as we walked home that you would never bring a wife under the same roof with your sister. You are right in that, and it is also right that while you live your sister should not be put away from under your roof. These things simply are so; I choose the one path there is for me to walk in.'

For a moment Paul was silent; as a man may well be who stands looking back, for the last time, upon the home, however dreary, however loveless, which yet has been his home for years; then he spoke, and his voice never faltered, never changed again.

'Esther, during the last week I have thought as much, probably I have reasoned more, than you, and I have come to a wholly different conclusion. To what I said when I saw you last, I hold still. A young fresh life, children's fresh faces, couldn't grow up under the same roof with Magdalen.'

'Never—never!' she clasped her cold hands passionately. 'You needn't repeat a word; I know it all.'

'You should never be brought under the same roof with her, and I know you too well to think that you would ever propose that she and I should be parted. I was wrong in saying the decision must come at all from you; the decision is for me. Esther, if my sister was now as she was even some years ago, I would not hesitate. If she knew me to the extent of missing me, or of looking for my coming, I would not

part from her—that I say and know to be truth. As long as her heart held to me by the very frailest thread, she should have had no rival; but the time is past, long and for ever past, when she was sensible of affection even for her own personal attendant. Do you remember meeting me one winter's morning near Dr. Wilmot's house at Bath?' Did she not remember it? did she not remember the lone, red house standing out, dark and desolate, against the winter sky! 'Well, at that time my sister was living under his care. I had heard of his great ability in her class of disorders, and contrived—I need hardly say at what a sacrifice—to get her under his care. When she left him he pronounced his verdict upon her state, an utterly hopeless verdict, I do not need to tell you. At the same time he made me an offer, should I desire it at any future time, to take her entirely into his charge.

'Esther, I know that she will be better with him than with me, and with him I have placed her. I'm not a man who takes long to decide in these things. I felt it my duty to take her away from the Carews and work for her, and I did it. You have awakened me now to an altogether new sense of life; you have made me feel that I owe more to myself than I can possibly owe even to the very nearest human tie I have. I have done the task I set myself, Magdalen is well provided for life, and I am free—free to live, to breathe the healthy, common air of daily life, and have the cares and joys of other men. Will you do more than you have already done? Having brought me back to desire life, will you make my life indeed worth holding? Will you spend it with me?'

She said not a word; only instinctively she held her hand out—instinctively she moved a step nearer to his side.

'Your answer involves no question of Magdalen, mind. Four days ago I took her to Dr. Wilmot's charge; if you refused to marry me I should still leave her there, and carry out the plan I have formed.

My plan is this—and it is not new, three years ago, when my sister was very ill, and the probability of my being left alone was forced upon me, I resolved upon it—I shall go to Australia.'

'Paul!'

'Why do you look so miserable, child?'

'I could never bear you to go; 'tis the very end of the world!'

'But the end best suited for a man like me. I have two friends, school-fellows of mine in Australia; one in the city of Adelaide, the other on a sheep-farm two or three hundred miles off; I shall go straight to Adelaide. My friend edits one of the first daily papers there, and will put me on his staff immediately I arrive. If I get on in town I shall lead a town life; if not—but I don't fear—I will invest the very little money that I possess in the world in a sheep-walk. No looks of yours would change my intentions, my little Esther! I've had enough of the old world. With my new desire of life has come a craving for a new field, for thoroughly fresh employment. The question is, will you come with me? You are not unsuited for a colonial life.'

'I can sew, and I can bake, and indeed do all about a house, sir. The thing is—'

'Go on, please.'

'Do you really want me? I don't know'—here she blushed furiously; 'but I feel as if it was all my doing. I mean that, through me, in some way, your life has changed, and now you think all you can do is—to take me with you! Mr. Chichester, I shall be an expense! You will be better alone.'

'Possibly. A wife is an encumbrance; and then I shall have my friend's fire-side to go to, his children to sit upon my knees. Will you write to me sometimes, Miss Fleming?'

She looked at him; and he took her to his breast and kissed her.

'You are making a miserable

marriage,' Paul remarked, after a long silence. 'Milly has married well, and in another month Jane will have married well. They will both of them have as many friends as they choose to pay for possessing, and you—yes, I mean to take you at once; you will not be Lady Feltham's bridesmaid, you will be on your voyage to Australia, poor, friendless, and alone.'

'Alone?' but the thought made her come closer to his side. 'Alone? Oh Paul, I shall be with you!'

MORAL.

Reader, if you are a man of fortune and desire the assistance of a young woman in getting rid of that fortune for you; if your heart yearns after a companion who shall dress extravagantly, who shall sit with credit at the head of your table, who shall make your house generally attractive to your friends,—do as Marmaduke Scott, and as Lord Feltham did. You need not be at the trouble of travelling to find what you require. London, Paris, Bath, Brighton, Cheltenham; wherever you may be, you will find the material ready to your hand.

Reader, if you are a man of education but no money, and are so inconceivably single-minded as to wish to possess a woman who shall be bound to you for life; if you have visions (God knows how, in this generation, they come into your head!) of a wife who shall work with and for you, cook your meat and mend your shirts, be your housekeeper and the mother of your children, and your own intellectual companion, and truest, tenderest friend—go and search for your ideal among the Devonshire Moors! You won't get her in large cities out of the classes from whom men take their wives.

And, unfortunately, the Devonshire Moors are every day becoming more enclosed.

THE END.

NOTES ON AN OLD LOVE STORY.

'C'est l'amour, l'amour, l'amour,
Qui mène le monde à la ronde.'

SO airily does the popular song exhibit the erotic creed of the light-hearted youth of la belle France. We wonder if the young and ardent Picard, M. Blouse Blene—who with a happy equanimity is accustomed to think little of the conflagration of his house if only he has been provident enough to make sure that the key is in his pocket—as he trills the refrain upon, behind, or alongside the eternal white horse of his native province, ever thought that he had borrowed his philosophy from the easy-going system of Epicurus, as rendered in Roman numbers by the poet-martyr, Lucretius. In two lines—allowing for repetition, indeed, in one line and a quarter—the peasant gives the pith of the first twenty of the invocation to

'Æneadum genetrix, hominum divumque voluptas
Alma Venus,'

whom the poet, with a logic warped by the same fallacy as that which, long ages afterwards, befooled the hot, chivalrous Lord Herbert of Cherbury, calls upon to be the divine patroness of a work which was to demonstrate to the world the grand and exhilarating fact of divine remoteness and *insouciance*. The painful John Mason Good thus does into the vernacular of the greater part of these islands, the lines referred to:—

'Parent of Rome! by gods and men beloved,
Benignant Venus! thou, the sail-clad main
And fruitful earth, as round the seasons roll,
With life who swellest, for by thee all live,
And, living, hail the cheerful light of day:
Thee, goddess, at thy glad approach, the winds,
The tempests fly: dedalian Earth to thee!
Pours forth her sweetest flow'rets: Ocean
laughs,
And the blue heavens in cloudless splendour
decked:
For when the Spring first opes her frolic eye,
And genial zephyrs, long locked up, respire,
Thee, goddess, thee the aerial birds confess,
To rapture stung through every shivering
plume:
Thee, the wild herds, hence, o'er the joyous
glebe
Bounding at large, or, with undaunted chest,
Stemming the torrent tides. Through all that
lives,
So, by thy charms, thy blandishments o'er-
powered,
Springs the warm wish thy footsteps to pursue,

Till, through the seas, the mountains, and the
floods,
The verdant meads, and woodland filled with
song,
Spurred by desire, each palpitating tribe
Hastes, at thy shrine, to plant the future race.'

What Lucian, or Cicero, or Fontenelle, or De Foe, or Savage Landor will discover, for an expectant posterity, the emendations which the tuneful Carus—alas, palpably too dear!—would suggest, if he could accomplish them, with the twilight of Hades shed upon them, after the action of that philter which first charmed away at intervals his reason, and then in the long-run urged him, like a springbok driven over a precipice, himself to horse the chariot in which he was to be transported into the Silent Land? Oh! thou departed utterer of the thing which is not, if thy cavalier doxology to Venus, and especially the lines we have emphasized by italics, be not as great a 'hum' as the 'gentle spring' and the 'ethereal mildness' of Jemmy Thomson—perhaps better known to thee by his more classical and antique cognomen of *Sophonisba*—what on earth—or, to probe thy feelings more acutely, what *under* the earth—is the meaning of all those touching stories of woe-begone lovers of which thou wert at once so cognisant and so cruelly forgetful? Where are the loves of 'infelix Dido,' and 'pious Æneas?' Where are the loves of Sappho, the tenth Muse, and the boatman Phaon, beautiful and inconstant? Have the loves of Hero and Leander delivered them from going down to the abysses where erst the founded Helle entered? Verily thou and thy 'Grius homo,' Epicurus, might, in your own day be men, but wisdom did not die with you. We moderns know a thing or two, thanks to a *par nobile*, with whom, as they left this world with other aspirations and hopes than yours, it is possible you have not forgathered, and whom we shall decline on this occasion to introduce to you. Every Englishman—with bows to Victor Hugo, and in a spirit of calmly proud appropriation with which the brilliant Frenchman who has broken in the 'hop, skip, and jump' of our childhood to the paces of criticism, can have nothing to do—

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NOTES ON AN OLD LOVE STORY.

"Roused from his throne beneath the wave
Those holy forms the god embraced—
And himself their guest!"

